

Wild

AUSTRALIA'S WILDERNESS ADVENTURE MAGAZINE

Autumn

(April-June) 1993, no 48

\$6.50*

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sleeping-
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Tasmania's south coast
Mt Bogong
Lake Eyre**

**Mt Feathertop XCD
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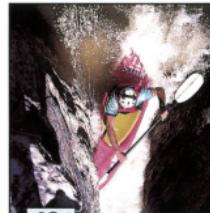
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WHAT GOES ON AT WILD

The inside story

We write a good deal about conservation of the environment in the pages of *Wild*. How does this translate in the way we operate at Wild Publications? Is it possible to run a successful, independent, commercial operation according to principles of environmental responsibility?

Wild was one of the first quality colour magazines in Australia to use recycled paper. Since issue no 43 *Wild* has been printed on recycled, oxygen- (not chlorine-) bleached paper. In issue no 45 I reported that we'd found a suitably heavy, environmentally acceptable paper for *Wild's* covers—the major component of which is sugar-cane fibre. We recently discovered that the sugar-cane component is smaller than we thought—and is chlorine-bleached (though the wood-pulp component is not). Fortunately, there is now a more acceptable alternative, which we are using for our covers starting with this issue—50 per cent recycled paper which has been oxygen-bleached. It is more expensive, but we think the extra cost is justified. We also use recycled paper for most of our stationery and other printed material, including subscription forms. All waste paper in our office is recycled, as is the film used by our printer to make plates to print each issue, and as are our printer ribbons. Indeed, we go to pains to run our business economically and without waste.

We seek to achieve a balanced view regarding resource consumption by actively promoting low-tech alternatives wherever possible. Trix, for example, was introduced for this purpose. Uncomfortable with rampant consumerism, we see ourselves solely as quality wilderness magazine publishers, not as mass, mail-order, merchandising monarchs. All items in our small mail-order range (produced by us or to our exclusive specifications), are designed to assist in using our magazines as reference works (indexes, guidebook covers and binders) or to promote the magazines (posters, cards and T-shirts).

The issue of editorial integrity is to be considered in this matter, too. How could we independently review books and other publications in our Reviews department if we sold some of them by mail order?

From the outset we have sought to promote greater understanding as well as greater enjoyment of the environment. To this end we have introduced over the years the Green Pages, conservation articles, and occasional Reflections. We rely on you, our readers, to provide the articles, photos and other material published in each issue. We believe in the creative power of a natural enthusiasm, even passion, for our wild places which is not primarily motivated by commercial self-interest.

An important 'sideline' to our work on the magazines is to write submissions to authorities responsible for wild places that may be under threat. Allied with this is an increasing co-operation with organizations such as the Wilderness Society, the Victorian National Parks Association and the Australian Conservation Foundation on a wide range of issues of common concern, from environmental campaigns to administrative and commercial matters.

We've explained before how part of the proceeds from all mail-order sales (including subscriptions and renewals) is donated to the Wilderness Society and World Vision. In February, in respect of our 1992 mail-order sales, we gave an additional \$7000 to be shared between these two organizations. We recently made further commitments to the Wilderness Society and to the ACF. Donations to these and other organizations to date total many thousands of dollars, not counting substantial advertising discounts.

We have sought to make Wild Publications a good example of a professionally run, truly independent enterprise. The Small Business Award announced in *Wild* no 47 is recognition of this, as are other awards we've mentioned in earlier issues, such as the Australian Geographic Society's Silver Medal and the National Print Award nomination.

Our advertising content is regulated by strict—and unusual—rules. We constantly keep in mind that to publish a magazine of the quality you demand, advertising support is necessary. Simply, without advertising there would be no magazine as we know it. However, we are also aware that, unless very carefully managed, advertising can hold too much sway, to the detriment of the magazine and its readership. The tail must not be allowed to wag the dog.

With this in mind, we have always applied a number of strict checks and balances to ensure that the integrity of the readers' experience is not compromised. The most obvious example is the quota which restricts the advertising content of *Wild* to exactly 50 per cent of the magazine. As a check of any issue of *Wild* will readily confirm, this policy has been in force since our first year of publication—1981—although we regularly have to turn away would-be advertisers to make certain that this self-imposed ratio is not exceeded. We accept only ethical advertising. We go a step further, however, by accepting only 'specialist' advertising of direct relevance to the rucksack sports. And to make sure that all advertisements appearing in *Wild* are of the highest possible standard, we have two professional editors who check every one and, where necessary, suggest changes.



Staying in the picture—Chris in the Mt Difficult Range, northern Grampians, Victoria.

These activities are all very well, but without the support of our readers we couldn't carry them out. In effect, we act as your agents in taking such actions. Our biannual readership surveys seek to establish exactly what your requirements are and it is up to us to review every issue and 'deliver the goods'—or neglect your wishes at our peril! It has been our long-held aim to continue to provide you with better value for money. Hence over the last two years the average size of *Wild* has increased from 106 to 113 pages, guidebooks (now with full-colour covers) have been added as a free 'extra' to every second issue, and the current cover price will be held for a total of at least three years. On the 'quality front', we've added new features including Trix, occasional Reflections and, more recently, the Wild Diary, Green Pages Action Box and classifications to our Classifieds(!) and Equipment department, among other things.

What else would you want us to do? ■

Chris Baxter

Chris Baxter
Managing Editor



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Advertising rates are available on request. Copy deadlines (advertising and editorial): 8 October (summer issue), 15 January (autumn), 15 April (winter), 15 July (spring). See below for publication dates.

Contributions, preferably well illustrated with slides, are welcome. *Guidelines for Contributors* are available on receipt of a stamped, addressed envelope. Wherever possible, a written submission should be sent on a 3½" floppy disk. If you do not have a floppy disk suitable for loading to an MS-DOS computer, so that we can write it out as a straight text file or an ASCII file without rekeying. Hard copy should also be supplied. If not on disk, a submission should be typed, double-spaced, on one side of sheets of A4 paper. Submissions not accompanied by an envelope and sufficient postage cannot be returned.

Name and addresses should be written on disks, manuscripts and photos. Whilst every care is taken, we do not accept responsibility for material submitted. Articles represent the views of the authors, and not necessarily those of the publisher.

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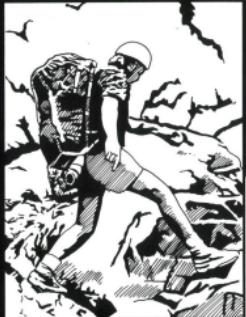
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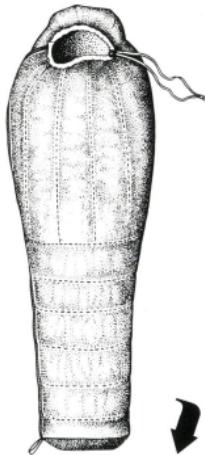
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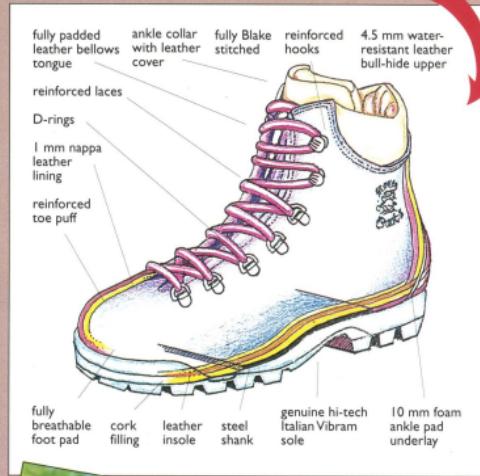
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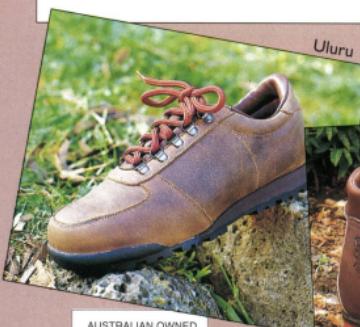
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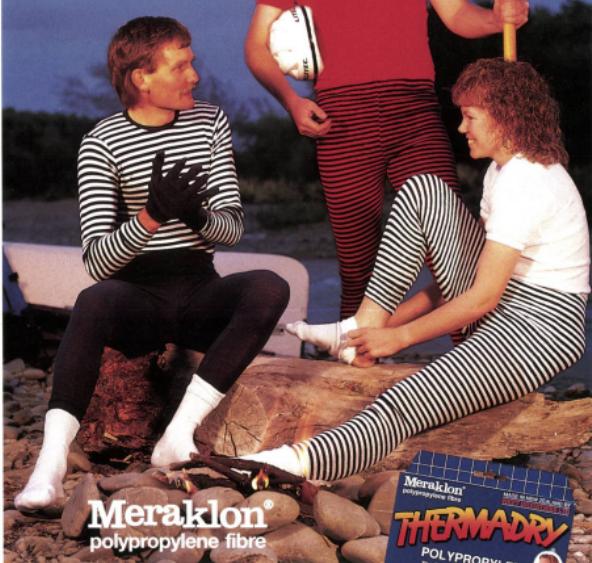
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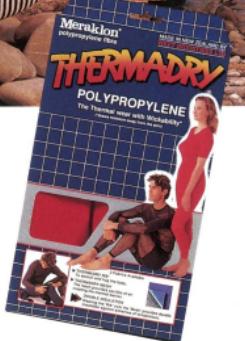
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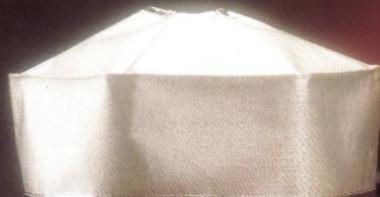
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THE Paddy Pallin UPDATE

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MARCH–MAY 1993

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Two products you really should see are the new "Slipstream" and "Micropants". They're made of our new microfibre fabric

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Tika Tutuko \$349

DINING OUT – NEWS!



DINING OUT – NEWS!

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Maintaining the pace

Peter Treseder and friends step out

You can't keep a good man down

In November 1992, prolific tiger walker Peter Treseder completed a 400 kilometre trip through the Blue Mountains, New South Wales, from Muswellbrook to Mittagong in the continuous time of 65 hours 58 minutes. His route traversed Wollemi, Blue Mountains, Kanangra-Boyd and Nattai National Parks, and took in features such as Gospers Mountain, Mt Mistake, the Blue Gum Forest, Mt Cloudmaker, Kanangra Walls, Yerranderie, and the Nattai River. Some of Treseder's aims were to increase awareness of the rare and endangered plants and animals in the Blue Mountains; and to promote a submission for World Heritage nomination of the Blue Mountains National Parks. The trip was also Treseder's way of celebrating in inimitable fashion several important anniversaries for wilderness in New South Wales (see Information, *Wild* no 46).

In August, Tony Gavranich, Treseder, Keith Williams and Ken Wilson made the first complete traverses of the Isdell and Charnley Rivers and Manning Creek, in the Kimberley, Western Australia, by raft and on foot. Highlights of the trip included the first known descent of the fabulous Isdell Gorge, and the discovery of what may be the largest boab tree in Australia. The four also found many examples of Aboriginal art, and an explorer's survey mark which, they believe, dates back to the early 19th century.

Avalanche school

More than 300 ski tourers and mountaineers attended a series of lectures and field workshops in avalanche awareness given by Tasmanian-born mountain guide Geoff Wayatt at Mt Field, Tasmania, and in Canberra, during August 1992. Topics covered included the use of avalanche transceivers, snow-profile analysis, and rescue techniques. Wayatt plans to run a similar programme in Australia during 1993. For details, contact him at PO Box 204, Wanaka, New Zealand—telephone (64 3) 443 7330.

Deep and long

International Caver magazine recently published an up-to-date list of the world's most extensive caves. The deepest is Réseau Jean Bernard, in France, at -1602 metres. Nettlebed Cave, New Zealand, drops to -889 metres; the deepest cave in Australia is Tasmania's Ice Cube-Growling Swallet system at -375 metres. The Mammoth system in the USA is the longest in the world. It extends for a staggering 531 kilometres and 69 metres. Mamo Kanana, in Papua New Guinea, is well up the list at 54.8 kilometres. Western Australia's Old Homestead Cave was recently explored to a length of 23 kilometres and Jenolan Caves, New South Wales, to 21; Tasmania's Exit Cave—finally safe, it seems, from further damage by limestone mining (see



Peter Treseder, left, and Keith Williams during the first recorded descent of the Isdell Gorge in the Kimberley region, north-west Western Australia. *Keith Williams collection*

Green Pages in this issue)—measures 19.2 kilometres, with further passages yet to be surveyed.

Stephen Buntion

Corrections and amplifications

It was noted in Wild Information, *Wild* no 47, that Greg Child and Mark Moorhead had taken part in expeditions to Makalu, Nepal. Fred From was on Makalu with Moorhead and the two reached the expedition's high point at 7600 metres. Mike Rheinberger has been higher on Makalu than any other Australian. He reached an altitude of 8250 metres as a member of a mainly British expedition during 1992. The authoritative book by Louis Baume, *Sivalaya—The 8000-metre Peaks of the Himalaya*, puts Makalu's height at 8481 metres, not 8463 metres as stated in *Wild* no 47.

The height of Mt Vinson, Antarctica, is 5140 metres, not 6140 metres as stated in the advertisement on page 71 of *Wild* no 47.

NEW SOUTH WALES

Successful challenge

The first Outland Rock & River Challenge, held on 22 November 1992 at Sydney's Barrenjoey Head, was contested by a field of thirty. David Eddington won the men's section; Sara Hutchison, the women's. The event consisted of orienteering, abseiling and prusiking, four rockclimbs (without specialized climbing shoes), and a canoe slalom course in choppy seas. The Challenge proceeded smoothly and will be repeated in November 1993.

Warrumbungles guidebook

This popular and spectacular New South Wales climbing area has been without an accurate or up-to-date rockclimbing guidebook for many years. Mark Colyvan is in the process of rectifying that situation and would like to receive descriptions of new routes, corrections to existing descriptions, good slides of climbing in the area, and other information as soon as possible. Send to 89 Mossman St, Armidale, NSW 2350.

Good sport

The National Sport Climbing Championships, to be held in the Blue Mountains town of Mt Victoria during the Escalade '93 festival for climbers, will have five categories—men's open and intermediate, women's open and intermediate, and veterans'. Heats will be held on Saturday 24 April and finals the following day. There will be a charge of \$4 for admission to the large public viewing area. For more information, telephone Lucas Trihey on (047) 87 1480, or Philip Toomer of the Australian Sport Climbing Federation on (02) 264 2908.

TASMANIA

Bush bums

The Department of Parks, Wildlife and Heritage has added to the material it distributes to organizations with an interest in bushwalking in Tasmania. New publications include notes for bushwalkers on the Overland Track through Cradle Mountain-Lake St Clair National Park and the Frenchmans Cap track; these are to be followed by notes for Franklin River rafters and for walkers in the South-west National Park. Whilst not giving route descriptions, the notes cover such topics as transport, safety, huts and camping, stoves and fires, and sanitation. *The*

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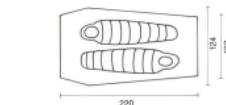
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Colour	Jade/purple

Weight (total) (fly, poles)	2.9 kg
Capacity	2-person
Poles	2 Easton aluminium
Pegs	6
Inner	190 denier nylon
Outer	1500 mm nylon
Floor	Seam-sealed tub
Colour	Jade/purple

Weight (total) (fly, poles)	2.5 kg
Capacity	2-person
Poles	2 Easton aluminium
Pegs	6
Inner	190 denier nylon
Outer	1500 mm nylon
Floor	Seam-sealed tub
Colour	Jade/purple

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THE INDEPENDENT SPECIALISTS



Overland Track—A Walkers Notebook describes in greater detail the cultural and natural history of the area through which the track passes. *Welcome to the Wilderness* is a 32-page booklet designed to assist people who plan a bushwalk in the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area—and to spread the word concerning department policy for the area. The booklet contains notes on planning and preparation, minimal-impact bushwalking, and first aid, and includes an equipment check-list and a trip intentions form. It foreshadows the controversial issue of the introduction of fees and a system of passes, initially for the most popular tracks but eventually to be applied to all tracks in the World Heritage Area. All publications are available from the Land Information Bureau, GPO Box 44A, Hobart, Tas 7001—free of

charge with the exception of *The Overland Track—A Walkers Notebook* (RRP \$8.95 including postage).

A draft *Track Management Strategy for the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area*, the result of a long and detailed review of the State's wilderness tracks, is now available for public comment. Two public seminars were to be held in Tasmania during February to discuss the draft strategy. Telephone the department on (002) 33 6552 to obtain a copy. See also Green Pages in this issue.

country...I will continue to drink from our beautiful streams, while heeding the cautions given in the enclosed newsletter.' The newsletter—in fact a press release from 'Mountain Safety Waikato'—points out that giardia has been in New Zealand for decades and is present in water throughout the country as well as in wild and domestic animal populations; that giardia infection can be cured and does not have long-term consequences for otherwise healthy adults; that stomach illness from most untreated drinking water is more likely caused by organisms other than giardia; and that symptoms of giardia take about 10 days to develop after ingestion of cysts—by which time most wilderness trips will be over. Giardia infection can be avoided without recourse to expensive filters or chemicals, it says, by observing 'some basic hygiene and commonsense practices': careful washing and toilet procedures; bringing water to a rolling boil—and cooling it, if required—before drinking; and drawing water to drink from the surface of a clear, still pool rather than from a turbulent part of the river—since giardia cysts are quite heavy and settle relatively quickly.

Work experience?

During April a group of Australian secondary school students will travel to Nepal and will trek in the Himalayas and participate in some of the work of the Himalayan Trust. They will help with maintenance work on the hospital at Kunde and build a solar-powered ablation block at Thyangboche. The project will be led for the Australian Youth Adventures organization by mountaineer Peter Hillary, whose father, Sir Edmund Hillary, founded the Himalayan Trust 30 years ago.

Health hazard

An item in a recent issue of *New Scientist* magazine reported the findings of a year-long survey of British caves, which discovered within caves levels of radioactive radon gas many times those considered safe in British homes. Radon is a product of the decay of uranium in the rock in which the caves are found; exposure to it increases the risk of lung cancer. As a result of these and similar findings, some of Britain's caves have cut back the time they spend underground. Various public bodies are considering the legal implications for those who work underground and their employers, and for outdoor centres and education authorities which conduct caving trips.

Moving pictures

The seventh World Festival of Mountain Pictures, which was to have been held at Antibes, on the French Riviera, during December 1992 (see *Information*, *Wild* no 46), moved from the beach to Briançon, in the Alps, and was rescheduled from December to March, at somewhat short notice—too short, at any rate, for us to mention it in *Wild* no 47. To all those many *Wild* readers who no doubt turned up at Antibes: sorry, and we hope you had a nice week by the seaside. ■

Wild Diary

1993

March	27-28	Instructor training & assessment C	ACT/ NSW	(06) 65 8443
April	3	Autumn 12-hour Rogaine	Vic	(03) 489 4029
	3-4	Sea instructor training & assessment C	NSW	(06) 295 6062
	10-11	Autumn 24-hour Rogaine	NSW	(02) 665 4925
	17-18	YHA 50 Peaks B	NSW	(02) 267 3044
		VCC beginner rockclimbing course	Vic	(03) 428 5298
	24-5	Escalade 93 mountain festival RC	NSW	(047) 87 1480
		Australian National Sport Climbing Championships	NSW	(02) 264 2994
May	1-2	River rescue course grade 1C	ACT/ NSW	(06) 288 5610
		VCC beginners' rockclimbing course	Vic	(03) 428 5298
	8	Victorian 82½-hour Canoeing Championships	Vic	(03) 489 4029
	15-16	VCC beginners' rockclimbing course	Vic	(03) 428 5298
	22-23	Basic skills instructor course C	NSW	(02) 809 6993
June	5	Winter 6½-hour Rogaine	Vic	(03) 489 4029
	6	Melbourne Cross Country Ski Show	Vic	(03) 487 5432
	19-20	Advanced & proficiency testing C	ACT	(06) 288 5610
July	11	30th Paddy Pallin	NSW	(02) 665 4925/ 008 005 398
		2½-hour Rogaine	Vic	(03) 489 4029
	11	Metrogaine R	NSW	(02) 665 4925
	24-25	Advanced & proficiency testing C	ACT/ NSW	(06) 288 5610
August	14	Snoagine R	Vic	(03) 489 4029
	21-22	River rescue course grade II C	ACT/ NSW	(06) 288 5610
	28-29	NSW 24-hour Rogaining Championships	NSW	(02) 665 4925
September	4	Spring 12-hour Rogaine	Vic	(03) 489 4029
October	2	Spring 8½-hour Rogaine	Vic	(03) 489 4029
	5-8	Ski & Outdoor Trade Show	ACT	(03) 482 1206
	15-16	Proficiency testing C	NSW	(02) 809 6993
November	13	Spring 6½-hour Rogaine	Vic	(03) 489 4029
		B bushwalking C canoeing R rogaining RC rockclimbing		



Treading very carefully in the wilderness. A low-tech crossing on the Narcissus River, Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area. *Marlene Chesney collection*

The entry fees to Tasmanian National Parks foreshadowed in *Wild Information*, *Wild* no 47, come into force on 1 May in the most popular parks. These include Cradle Mountain-Lake St Clair and South-west National Parks. A day's pass will cost \$5 and a three-day pass \$8. Tasmanians will be able to buy a year's entry for \$40; visitors from other States will have to pay \$30 a month.

Short cut to the grave?

The Cradle-to-Coast multi-sports event, a feast of running, paddling and cycling which takes competitors along the Overland Track, across Lake St Clair, down the Derwent River, and over Mt Wellington to Hobart, was to be held on the long weekend of 5-7 March. Before this year the fastest time for the event stood at 26 hours 55 minutes. We have no results as yet.

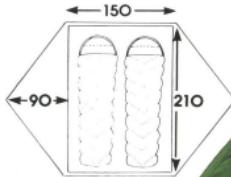
OVERSEAS

Overdose

A Wild reader from New Zealand has written to suggest that the presence of giardia in some New Zealand rivers (see *Wild Information*, *Wild* no 46) is not as great a problem as has been supposed. Bob Murie of Wanaka writes: 'I agree with the advisory notices, but I feel that their sudden introduction, and the rather alarmist articles in newspapers...convey the impression of a bubonic plague sweeping the

Readers' contributions to this department, including colour slides, are welcome. Typed items of less than 200 words are more likely to be printed. Send to the Editor, *Wild*, PO Box 413, Prahran, Victoria 3181.

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Polyester Flysheet. Polyester's high UV resistance (2-3 times that of nylon) means your tent will last longer with the added bonus of only half the stretch of nylon (giving better pitch and stability). The flysheet extends 'down to earth' to seal out wind-driven rain and snow. The fly can be pitched first in wet weather or by itself to provide a lightweight (2 kg) single-skin shelter for up to 3 or 4 people. Two closable vents (one in each vestibule) minimize condensation when cooking or when the fly is completely closed. All seams are factory seam-sealed for complete waterproofness.

Inner Tent has a genuine 'bath-tub' floor construction, lantern loops and handy storage pockets. Entrances on both sides have additional mosquito-net doors to ensure maximum 'flo thru' ventilation and provide a welcome sanctuary from annoying insects. The height of 115 cm allows two to sit up in comfort.

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F ORESTS AND TREES

The problem that will not go away

Woodchip licences renewed

The race continues—the race to plunder the native forests of Australia while there are some left worth cutting down and while there's a market for them. Early in January, Federal Minister for Resources, Alan Griffiths, renewed woodchip export licences for nine operations in Tasmania, New South Wales, Victoria, Western Australia and Queensland, which prompted the Wilderness Society's director, Karenne Jurd, to speak of 'the end of an era that started with the Franklin'.

The Labor Party of 1983, she said, 'was able to see and fulfil the Commonwealth's vital role in protecting the environment. On issues of natural heritage, the Labor Party of 1993 doesn't have the wit or the gumption to continue that proud record.' In announcing the renewals, Griffiths advised conservationists unhappy about woodchipping of native forests to concentrate on criticizing forestry practices in individual States. It seems clear that the Federal Government does not intend to tackle the problem; conservationists, it is hardly surprising to note, felt somewhat betrayed by this approach.

The government's support of export woodchipping appears to be at odds on several counts with the recent report of the Resource Assessment Commission and with the government's own commitment to avoid activities which have a serious impact on forests of high conservation value—an element of the recently signed National Forest Policy. The government plans to phase out export woodchipping by the end of the decade; it is hard to avoid the conclusion that there is a race on to extract as much profit as possible from native forests before this phase-out is completed.

And the minister's assertion that the woodchip industry should be supported because it provides thousands of jobs contradicts the RAC report, which puts the number of people employed at about 800. Conservationists have long made the point that the rise of export woodchipping since the 1960s has seen the amount of wood taken from native forests increase by about 40 per cent and the number of people employed in the timber industry fall by 40 per cent. Export woodchipping employs two per cent of the industry's work-force yet accounts for 45 per cent, by volume, of wood products.

The list of good reasons why the export of woodchips from Australia's native forests should stop is long—the loss of habitat for native fauna; soil erosion and loss of nutrients; reduction in stream flow and water quality—yet the practice continues. When will it end? And what will be left of our forests by the time it does?

Another persistent problem—and one closely related to the decline in forest cover—is the plight of endangered species. According to the Wilderness Society, a recent



Recent logging in East Gippsland, Victoria, with a newly constructed road across the head of a gully, photographed during the gathering of data for Forestwatch 92. *Julian Meehan*

independent survey found that 96 per cent of Australians agree that endangered species should be protected; and 89 per cent think that the Federal Government should have the power to protect them. Yet vested interests still oppose legislation which would give the government that power. See the article on page 54 for more on endangered species—and the box on page 56 for what you can do to help in this important matter.

Bleached relics

The summer 1992 issue of *Greenpeace Australia News* reports that Australia has plans for five chlorine-bleaching pulp mills at a time when pulp producers in other countries are phasing out the use of chlorine as a bleaching agent in favour of such materials as oxygen, hydrogen peroxide and ozone. The report says that there are mills planned for Grafton in New South Wales; Maryvale and Orbost in Victoria; Burnie in Tasmania; and for south-western Western Australia. Greenpeace is calling on the Federal Government to replace its guide-lines for new mills and to revamp the CSIRO's research programme into pulp mills.

Sea change

The Australian Conservation Foundation has assembled a wealth of information about the state of Australia's coastal environment and has launched a long-term campaign for its protection. This involves participation in the Resource Assessment Commission's inquiry into the subject, already under way. Among many disturbing facts the ACF will be using to support its case: a study by the University of New England shows that every one of the

81 estuaries along the New South Wales coast is polluted; CSIRO calculates that 60 per cent of coastal wetlands in southern and eastern Australia have been lost through clearing, filling, tourism or urbanization; and 77 000 tonnes of nitrogen, 1100 tonnes of phosphorus, and 15 000 000 tonnes of sediment are washed on to the Great Barrier Reef every year from Queensland's coastal catchments. If you'd like to help, and especially if you have expertise in coastal and marine matters, see Action Box item 1.

All aboard

Ark Australia, to quote from one of its brochures, 'is a non-political, non-confrontational environmental organization which works with business and individuals to deliver "positive" environmental education messages'. Its many high-profile supporters include Pat Cash, Elle Macpherson, Jenny Morris, Wendy Matthews, Richard Neville and Greta Scacchi. The idea for such a collection of celebrities with an interest in the environment originated in the United Kingdom during 1988. Ark Australia was launched last November.

Bird Watch

Bird Watch (see Green Pages, *Wild* no 45) is on again. Last year 22 schools in the eastern States took part in the project, and organizers hope that more will join in during 1993. There will be a variety of activities, and schools can participate by ordinary or electronic mail. Bird Watch is supported by the Gould League of Victoria, the Royal Australian Ornithologists' Union and the Bird Observers' Club of Australia. See Action Box item 2.

Bagged

Wild reader Tim Shillington of Red Hill, ACT, was kind enough to alert us to this tip for the

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RICHARDS McCALLUM

frequent traveller, which appeared in the *Sydney Morning Herald* during November 1992. Ahem!

Further to packing a suitcase. My 15-year-old son, Tom, goes overseas a lot to stay with friends and the mothers of his mates are always impressed by the neatness of his packing.

The reason is that from an early age he has been taught how to iron, how to fold clothes and how to pack them properly...The trick with packing is to keep items separate in plastic bags. I started off with plastic shopping bags from Coles at Bondi Junction and then I graduated to the [brand X] plastic bags which cost less than a dollar each...I can get three shirts in these—some people claim four—and they are ready for wearing as soon as I unpack.

Now, Jan Liddle has introduced me to her company's [brand Y] bags. For shirts and blouses [brand X] is the way to go. The second size is 16 by 17 cm and ideal for carrying in a leak-proof way the lotions and ungents I use to keep my schoolgirl's complexion...

Shillington writes: 'I couldn't help but laugh...Not only do I fail to see the benefit of separating every article of clothing into its own plastic bag but imagine the wastage if you did lots of short trips. No doubt the plastic bags would all go in the bin when they returned...' But, Tim, think of your complexion!

NORTHERN TERRITORY

For the birds

Territory conservationists, including the Environment Centre of the Northern Territory, have been involved in something of a running battle over plans for a gold-mine at Mt Todd, 45 kilometres north of Katherine. At risk is a population of the endangered Gouldian finch which contains more than 42 per cent of the known nests of the species. The ECNT criticized the draft environmental impact statement which appeared in October, saying that the company seemed to have given misleading and inaccurate information about the finch's habitat and where it is found; the result was to make the probable impact of the proposed mine on the finch appear less serious. According to the ECNT's Jamie Pittcock, a supplement to the draft statement, released just three weeks after the closing date for public comment, ignored scientific criticisms and proposed simply that monitoring of the finch population be *reduced* and the money thus saved be given to the Australian National Parks & Wildlife Service to help with Australia-wide measures to conserve the species. The ECNT welcomed the establishment of a 'recovery plan' for the finch, but argued that it was no substitute for taking adequate measures to protect the bird in the first place. The speed at which the proposal was proceeding apparently reflected the requirements of the Commonwealth's Major Project Facilitation Unit—responsible for 'fast-tracking' of big developments. An NT Conservation Commission memo echoed the ECNT's criticisms of this process: 'The assessment timetable has been accelerated [and] the Commission considers that the adequacy of the final EIS has been affected as

a consequence...' Matters 'glossed over' or inadequately covered in the final impact statement, the memo said, include 'acid mine drainage; statistically valid Gouldian finch monitoring methods; the effects of dust and noise on the Gouldian finch; and access by wildlife to contaminated water'. It appears that, in this case at least, fast-tracking and adequate assessment of environmental impact do not go together.

Rethink, redevelop, recycle

The ECNT has applauded a government project which converted a former rice farm into a conservation reserve. Fogg Dam, 70 kilometres south-east of Darwin, is now said to be one of the best and easiest places to view 'top end' wildlife. An elevated walkway leads through a variety of ecological communities from savannah and rain forest to the edge of the Adelaide River flood plains. The reserve is expected to appeal to tourists and to Darwin

residents eager to see their own environment at closer range without the need to travel far.

QUEENSLAND

Frog-march to extinction

One might have thought that Australia's tropical rain forests were secure since the creation of the Wet Tropics Management Agency. Alas, not so. The agency is overseeing one of the biggest extinction events in Australia's post-European history.

Six species of frog from upland areas in the wet tropics have disappeared during the last 10 years. The agency has so far done nothing except provide a few thousand dollars so that one scientist in the Queensland National Parks and Wildlife Service can conduct surveys. There are moves to do more but at the present slow rate it will be too little, too late.

The agency has had plenty of warning. Frogs disappeared from rain forests in southern Queensland in the early 1980s and from those in central Queensland a couple of years later. Yet the absurd belief persisted that the northern frogs were safe. As a result no one has been monitoring changes in the streams, looking for possible diseases or changes in water chemistry, or even keeping a constant watch on the frogs to give early warning of diminution of their numbers. And there are no contingency plans for saving populations which remain; their decline will simply be watched in despair.

Much has been made of the disappearance of mammals from arid Australia but the early pioneers could be forgiven for their ignorance. The loss of frogs from Australia's tropical rain forest can be blamed squarely on those with responsibility for their protection. Bureaucratic inertia cannot be counted as a mitigating circumstance.

Troubled waters

The well-publicized spills of oil from tankers wrecked off Spain during December and in the Shetland Islands and Indonesia during January refocused attention on the risks posed by the 200 or more oil tankers which traverse the inner passage of the Great Barrier Reef every year. Tankers travel much of Australia's coastline, but the danger of accidents is disproportionately high in the confined waters surrounding the reef, and a major spill could have a disastrous impact on the reef environment and a corresponding effect on an important sector of Australia's tourism industry. Greenpeace accused the Australian Government, and in particular Senator Bob Collins, Minister for Transport and Communications, of allowing a false sense of security to blind it to the need for action to protect the reef. Greenpeace called for Australia's consumption of oil to be drastically reduced and for international oil-tanker traffic to be excluded from the waters of the Great Barrier Reef and redirected round Australia's west coast.

NEW SOUTH WALES

Wilderness—the state of play

Submissions poured in when the people of New South Wales were invited during 1992 to comment on assessment reports on ten areas

Action Box

Readers can take action on the following matters covered in Green Pages in this issue.

1 To join the campaign to protect the coastal environment, contact the Australian Conservation Foundation, 340 Gore St, Fitzroy, Vic 3065—telephone (03) 416 1166.

2 For details of Bird Watch, contact project co-ordinator Graham Gales, Goulburn: North-eastern Regional Office, PO Box 403, Benalla, Vic 3672—telephone (057) 61 2124; or electronic mail (Keylink or Nexus): cockatoo.

3 Comments and submissions on the Werrimbe and New England wilderness areas must reach the Director, NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service, PO Box 1967, Hurstville, NSW 2220, by 19 April. Copies of the relevant assessment reports are available from the same address. For further information on how to draft your submission, contact the Wilderness Society in Sydney—telephone (02) 267 7929.

4 Readers can help to keep Green Point green by writing to the Minister for Planning, Robert Webster, Parliament House, Sydney, NSW 2000; or to the Green Point Action Committee, PO Box 148, Valentine, NSW 2000.

5 Donations to the campaign for World Heritage nomination of the Australian Alps, and indications of support from organizations, should be sent to Doug Humann, Director, Victorian National Parks Association, 100 Parliament Place, East Melbourne, Vic 3002. Donations are tax-deductible.

6 To support the campaign to end drift-netting in international waters, contact Greenpeace in your State.

7 For more information about the Mt Everest Environment Conservation Foundation, write to PO Box 3508, Kathmandu, Nepal.

8 For copies of *An Appeal for the Mountains*, write to Mountain Agenda, c/- Institute of Geography, University of Berne, Hallerstrasse 12, CH-3012 Berne, Switzerland.



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nominated for wilderness status. More than 20 000 individuals and organizations commented on the reports, which were prepared by the NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service. More than 75 per cent of them favoured protection, which gave the government a clear indication of the high level of support for the wilderness nomination process. A majority urged the government to reserve the areas in question—Deua, Goodradigbee, Nadgee, Kanangra-Boyd, Mann, Lost World, Binghi, Guy Fawkes, Oxley and Washpool—permanently in National Parks. The decision rests with State Cabinet and the Minister for the Environment, Chris Hartcher, and is expected early in 1993.

Meanwhile, despite assurances from the Minister for the Environment that logging would not take place in identified wilderness areas, witnesses have seen trees felled and removed from Dampier State Forest in the Deua wilderness. The NSW Forestry Commission is conducting these operations even though no credible fauna studies have been completed. The area is a known habitat of the tiger quoll, a species listed under Schedule 12 of the National Parks & Wildlife Service Act as rare and endangered. At the time of writing, the NPWS had been asked to apply a stop-work order under the State's endangered fauna legislation.

Two further Wilderness Nomination Assessments—for the Werrrikimbe and New England wilderness areas—were released for public comment on 18 December. Both areas are on the New England Tableland in the north of the State and contain World Heritage rain forests, tall old-growth forests, endangered species, and places of outstanding scenic beauty. *Wild* readers have the chance to let the government know that they support the preservation of wilderness. See Action Box item 3.

Andrew Cox

Keeping Green Point green

Lake Macquarie, near Newcastle, is Australia's largest coastal lake. A freeway now links the lake to Sydney and urban development is rampant.

An area of 220 hectares known as Green Point is the only sizeable chunk of bush and foreshore on the northern shores of Lake Macquarie which has not yet been developed. Most of it was recently purchased by a building and development firm, which naturally wishes to develop the site. At present the land is zoned 'non-urban'. Even though classification allows developments of certain types, which the new owner evidently hopes to pursue. It is believed that the company will seek eventually to have the land rezoned for urban development.

The Lake Macquarie City Council, and thousands of residents, oppose development of this last remnant of natural Lake Macquarie terrain on the populated northern shores. The council will apply to the Minister for Planning in March or April to have the land rezoned for open space.

The council is unable to buy the land for the new owner's price of \$12 million. It is understood that the developer paid less than half that amount when it acquired the land in December 1992. The natural values of the land

and its potential for recreation are at risk. See Action Box item 4.

Greg Powell

VICTORIA

Forestwatch 92

When the timber industry cuts down native forests, it is obliged to adhere to a legislated

standards of environmental protection as recommended in a range of scientific papers.

Jeremy Newton-John

Alps for World Heritage

The second *Alps for World Heritage Bulletin* put out by the VNPA lists organizations which support the nomination of the Australian Alps for inclusion on the World Heritage List.



Near Platypus Creek, New England National Park, NSW—within the New England wilderness area.
Andrew Cox

Code of Forest Practices to reduce the environmental impact of its activities. Environment groups have consistently claimed that the prescriptions of the code are being breached, and have undertaken surveys to substantiate their claims. The report of Forestwatch 92, the most recent such survey, was released by the Wilderness Society during November 1992. Forestwatch 92 investigated 20 areas, known as coupes, which had been logged during the preceding summer.

In the past, staff of the Department of Conservation & Environment, as it then was, have dismissed the findings of Forestwatch on the grounds that its methods were inappropriate and there had been a lack of consultation. Yet the latest study, which responded to those criticisms of earlier reports, recorded similar results. It found the level of breaches of forest prescriptions to be equal to that reported in a 1988 study of the same region—even though at that time there was no legal requirement to adhere to those prescriptions.

Forest operators such as fellers and operators of bulldozers who fail to abide by the standards laid down in the code can be penalized by the department through a system of demerit points. Department supervisors had allocated demerit points for only one breach of code guide-lines in the 20 coupes surveyed by Forestwatch 92, yet the study found at least 31 clear breaches.

The survey concluded that not only are adherence to the code by forest operators and supervision by the government inadequate, but the code itself does not meet minimum

Among them are the Australian Academy of Science; the Australian Conservation Foundation; several National Parks and National Trust bodies; the Albury-Wodonga Environment Centre; the Federation of Victorian Walking Clubs; Earth Foundation Australia Ltd; and the Colong Foundation for Wilderness Ltd. Four reports, on different parts of the proposed nomination, were prepared during 1992, and a consultancy—to produce an overview of the international significance of the Australian Alps [and] report to a steering committee nominated by the Australian Alps Liaison Committee—was advertised in October. To assist in this important campaign, see Action Box item 5.

What a difference a week makes

Conservationists were opposed to the forest policy of Jeff Kennett's Liberal-National Party coalition even before it won the 3 October election. The policy had been made public only a few days earlier and the outcry grew louder when the new government added two further pages immediately after the election. According to the Wilderness Society, the new pages 'advocate the clearing of existing native forests for the establishment of plantations...a forest practice that has been condemned by the National Plantation Advisory Committee and internationally at the Earth Summit...and the removal of existing vegetation clearance controls'. Where were these measures, the society asks, when the electors were weighing up their options?

A group of East Gippsland residents is concerned that the new government may resurrect the use of 1080 poison in logged forests. Regeneration is low in many East Gippsland logging coupes, and 1080 'helps' by killing native animals which feed on seeds

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and seedlings. Conservationists have long opposed its use.

Unbelievable?

During January, a breakfast show on Melbourne radio station 3AW included an extraordinary, unconfirmed report on the proposed construction of a block of luxury units at Mt Buller. A document relating to the proposal, which the Alpine Resorts Commission had apparently refrained from releasing, was read on air; there had been no mention of any such plans in the ARC's newsletter. Trees had already been cut down to make way for the building, the report said, even though the land in question is in an area where building is not allowed. Further, ARC approval had been sought 'but not in the usual manner', and the same person had both applied for approval and approved his own application. (See the Editorial in *Wild* no 46.)

Meanwhile, it is understood that the Land Conservation Council has been considering a suggestion from the ARC that the Mt Baw Baw alpine resort be extended out to the Baw Baw Plateau by taking over land at present reserved in the Baw Baw National Park and listed as an 'other area' under the State's wilderness legislation. The proposal would roughly treble the area excised from the park for inclusion in the resort, and would place the Tors, Howitt Hill and a short section of the Alpine Walking Track within the resort boundary.

TASMANIA

Exit Cave saved

Following the uproar in response to her surprising back-down reported in *Green Pages*, *Wild* no 47, Federal Minister for the Arts, Sport, the Environment & Territories, Ross Kelly, reversed her decision to allow mining at Bender's limestone quarry to continue for a further three months. Instead, mining was to cease immediately, on 30 October.

The Department of Parks, Wildlife & Heritage released to the public its own officers' findings that quarrying had damaged the cave—despite attempts to suppress their report.

As yet there is no plan for rehabilitation of the quarry, and the Tasmanian and Federal Governments are still wrangling over compensation for the quarry's closure. This discussion took a new tack when it was revealed that the quarry had been used as a dumping-ground for waste materials including drums of diesel fuel. The run-off from the waste dump has percolated into other caves in the area. The Federal Government alleges that the proprietor of the quarry knew of this dumping and thus violated the terms of the World Heritage Area management plan—and forfeited his right to any federal compensation money.

Stephen Bunton

Management?

The management plan for the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area has been approved by the Governor of Tasmania and is now available to the public from Tasmap, GPO Box 44, Hobart, Tas 7001. The plan allows

packs of dogs and people carrying shotguns into parts of the World Heritage Area—a sad reflection on the thinking of the present State Liberal Government under Premier Ray Groom.

Even more devastating is the legislation which governs development in the State. It does not allow members of the public to appeal against a development project unless they have a material interest in it; it is not enough that the project might impinge on their quality of life, spoil a view, remove trees or pollute the environment. The legislation leaves it to the Minister for the Environment to decide whether developments—wilderness, rural and urban alike—can go ahead. In the present political climate, that's rather like asking Colonel Sanders to look after your chickens.

SB

Ritual bathing

A couple of aspects of the draft management strategy for walking tracks in the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area briefly caught the imagination of the wider public. The *Sunday Tasmanian* noted during November the recommendation that bushwalkers be required to wash their boots at certain 'washdown points' before entering some parts of the World Heritage Area. Martin Hawes, who prepared the draft plan, was quoted as saying that it was hoped the washing would slow the introduction of the dieback fungus, *Phytophthora cinnamomi*. The paper also reported that walkers in the area would be encouraged to take out their own excrement, but that there were no plans for this to be made compulsory.

A subsequent report in the *Examiner* (Launceston) listed measures planned to protect the Western Arthur Range and halt the deterioration of tracks and campsites there. These include a proposal to limit the number of people allowed to visit the range to 100 a year. Last year, more than 1000 visited some part of the Western Arthurs, including more than 600 who traversed the range from Moraine A to Moraine K. Moraines E and K would be declared off limits except in an emergency—at least until the Moraine K track begins to recover from the use it has been receiving. Parts of the track might be re-routed, others equipped with walkways and steps, and the spread of campsites would be controlled.

The Department of Parks, Wildlife & Heritage intended to hold public seminars in Launceston and Hobart during February to discuss the draft strategy.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Life's a beach

A recent study by CSIRO researchers is being used to support the claim that the Kimberley coastline is of high conservation value yet poorly protected. Using computerized analysis of 1:100 000 scale maps, the study measured the Kimberley coast (excluding some 200 islands) at 4310 kilometres. More than 60 per cent of this is considered wilderness, yet only 7 per cent is protected in conservation reserves. One huge, unbroken stretch of wilderness coastline measures 2060

kilometres—longer than the entire coast of New South Wales.

Such statistics add weight to the Wilderness Society's proposal for a world-class National Park in the North Kimberley.

David Poland

OVERSEAS

A-whaling they still go

A fleet of four vessels set out from Japan during November 1992, bound for Antarctic waters where it planned to kill 330 minke whales. Japan has continued to hunt the whales under the guise of 'scientific research' despite an international moratorium on commercial whaling which has been in place since 1985. Greenpeace alleges that the meat of the whales killed ends up being sold as a delicacy in Japanese meat markets. Norway also conducted a 'scientific whaling' programme during 1992. Both countries plan to increase their catch in 1993, perhaps to as many as 2000 whales each. The campaign ship *Greenpeace* left Hobart, Tasmania, early in December with the aim of disrupting the operations of the Japanese fleet and publicizing the campaign for a whale sanctuary in southern waters. The International Whaling Commission will consider the French Government's proposal for the sanctuary, which is believed to have wide support among member countries already, at its 1993 meeting.

Greenpeace continues its well-known campaign against the use of drift-nets, described as 'walls of death' for marine creatures, and 'the marine equivalent of open-cut mines'. Drift-netting is on the wane amongst European and Japanese fishing fleets but is still practised by Taiwan and South Korea. At present Greenpeace is lobbying the United Nations for international controls over fishing. See Action Box item 6.

Fee for service

The Victorian Environment Protection Authority has received a letter from an organization called the Mt Everest Environment Conservation Foundation (EECF), set up recently in Kathmandu, Nepal, and recognized by the Nepali Government. Like other groups before it, the EECF plans to clear away waste left in the Himalayas by trekkers and mountaineers. Some of the language in the letter requires a little lateral thinking to interpret—for example: 'We feel glorious having to say that even the plan of organizing EECF-VARIOUS-CHAPTER in near future to whom should we submit it for well being?'—but three things seem clear: anyone may join members involved in clean-up campaigns will be able to go anywhere in the Nepal Himalayas, even to the summit of Mt Everest, without special permission; and foreign-based members will be given favoured treatment of an unspecified nature by the Nepali Immigration Department while staying in Nepal. Climbers contemplating peak fees of several thousand US dollars may be more than happy to offer the sweat of their brows to a good cause in exchange for free access to Himalayan peaks—if that is indeed what the letter proposes. And who could resist joining an organization whose three levels of membership are 'General...Prestigious &

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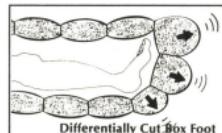
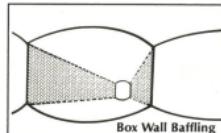
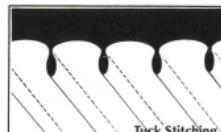
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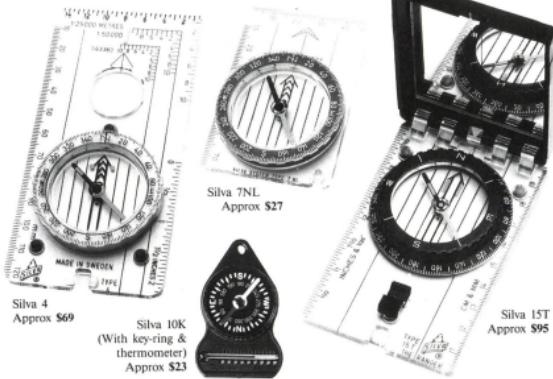


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GREEN PAGES

Super-prestigious [sic]? We'd feel glorious, too. See Action Box item 7.

Earth's bones

Wild no 47 includes a review of *The State of the World's Mountains: A Global Report*, a weighty, 416-page tribute to the world's mountains and a catalogue of the many threats to them, prepared by the international organization Mountain Agenda and inspired by the United Nations 'Earth Summit' of June 1992. Equally authoritative and much more accessible is a related 44-page booklet, called *An Appeal for the Mountains*. It deals concisely with mountains as a vital element of 'the water economy' and a factor in climatic change; as a storehouse of both biological diversity and spiritual significance; and as a resource for the tourism industry, for modern extractive industries, and for mountain-dwelling people over centuries. It then presents the world's ranges by regions—and, unlike its larger sibling, makes several references to New Zealand's mountains and at least one to Australia's. There are two pages of quotations from writers, including one from Chateaubriand, author of *A Journey to Mt Blanc*, which might raise a smile from some bushwalkers: 'I can only speak of what I feel among mountains. It is...very unpleasant...' We all have our bad days.

An Appeal for the Mountains would be interesting, and useful for a variety of purposes. It is distributed free in limited numbers. See Action Box item 8.

Ruination

The United Nations Environment Programme has released an 850-page report in which it is said that there has been irreversible deterioration in the world environment over the last 20 years—and that the situation is getting worse at an alarming rate. A section of the report quoted in the Melbourne Age's 'Environment Watch' of 12 December says: 'Global warming, ozone depletion, soil loss, falling forests, disappearing species, pollution, poverty—a chain of daunting challenges faces the world community.' A senior UNEP official said that there were positive signs, such as a huge reduction in emissions of pollutants into the air in western Europe, but that eastern Europe might need nearly \$A174 billion invested over the next ten years 'to clean its poisoned air, soil and water'.

Newspapers around the world, and *Greenpeace Australia News*, recently told of two government reports from the Russian Federation in which scientists describe 15 per cent of the country—2.5 million square kilometres—as 'ecologically unsafe' for human habitation. One-quarter of Russia's drinking water is also said to be unsafe and all its major rivers polluted. The death rate exceeds the birth rate, life expectancy is declining, and only 25 per cent of children complete their schooling in good health. As many as 2.7 million people still live in areas affected by the leak of radiation after an explosion in the nuclear power plant at Chernobyl in 1986. ■

Readers' contributions to this department, including colour slides, are welcome. Typed items of less than 200 words are more likely to be printed. Send to the Editor, Wild, PO Box 413, Prahran, Victoria 3181.

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SKI INJURIES

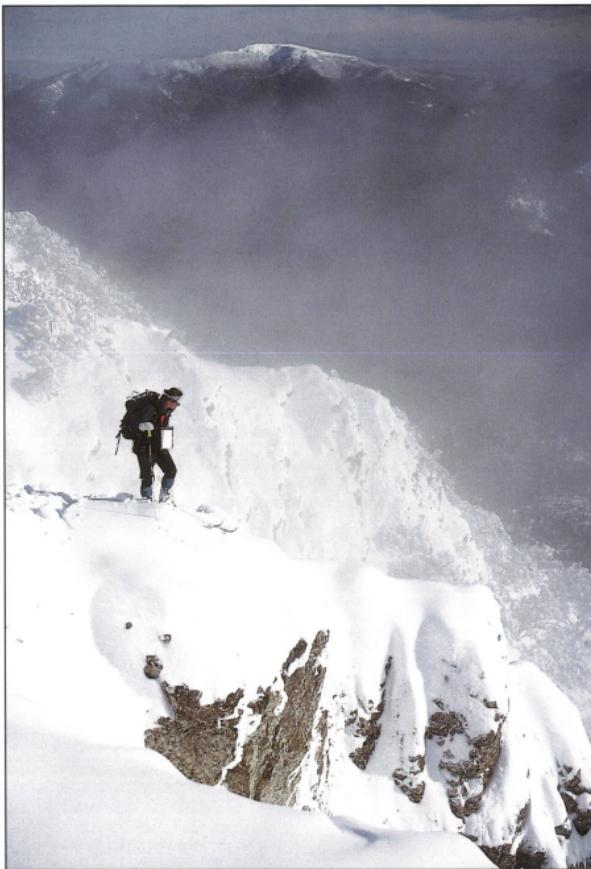
...and how to avoid them, by *Stuart Imer*

This can't be happening! The slope wasn't that steep and the bump you just hit looked quite small. So how is it that you're hurtling through the air more than a metre above the snow? Your body seems intent on assuming a horizontal flight position and your skis, poles and limbs are simultaneously moving to different points of the compass. Cross your fingers (and try not to cross your skis) and pray for a smooth landing.

Most cross-country ski injuries occur on downward-sloping terrain as a result of a fall. Common causes of injury include leverage on the arms and legs when poles and skis strike the snow or other objects; and impact of the skier with the snow, with other skiers or with immovable objects. This often results in soft-tissue trauma—*injury to the muscles, tendons and ligaments*—and occasionally, in fractures. Understanding how these injuries occur, and when they are most likely to happen, is the first step in trying to avoid them.

Factors such as equipment, terrain and 'skier variables' all contribute to the likelihood of injury. Changes in equipment design and in the materials used, such as the introduction of fibreglass skis during the 1970s and the use of stiffer boots (some now with plastic stiffeners and buckles), have enhanced the transmission of forces not only from the leg to the ski, but also in reverse—from the ski to the leg. This general 'beefing up' of equipment has left the skier more vulnerable as the weak link in the chain may now be the skier's ankle or knee. Similarly, the use of stronger fibreglass and aluminium poles has put the arm, and in particular the hand, at greater risk of injury. Modifications to binding systems, including cables and heel plates, heel locators, and grooved boot-and-binding systems, which give us greater control over our skis, may also work to our detriment in a fall. Terrain factors which may influence the likelihood of injury include the presence of ice, crud, deep corn or breakable crust; excessive angle of slope; the presence of obstacles; poor run-outs; cornices or other avalanche danger; poor visibility; and crowding—the last especially important at ski resorts. Skier variables, such as lack of fitness or skill, excessive speed, and fatigue can also increase your chances of coming to grief.

So how do you go about stacking the odds in your favour? You may not have control over such things as snow type (although I have heard that the ancient lost tribe of Bogong performs a remarkable powder-snow dance), but quite a number of variables can be manipulated to your advantage. No one would suggest that you buy flimsy equipment in the hope that it will break before you do, particularly if you want to pound the moguls or ski the steep chutes. There are hardly any



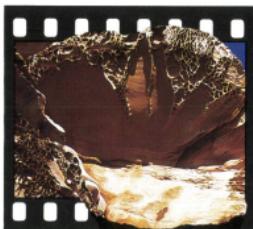
Not the place for a fall—near Mt Magdala in the Victorian Alps. *Andrew Brookes*

data available on the use of safety-release three-pin bindings, but it follows quite a natural progression already seen in the evolution of downhill-skiing equipment. Metal-edged skis will help you to hold an edge

on icy terrain, and in extreme circumstances the use of instep crampons may be appropriate.

Ski-pole type and, more importantly, grip type are also important. Where falls are likely, it may be wiser not to use the retention strap; the pole can then be discarded in the event of a fall. Forces generated on the arm or hand by

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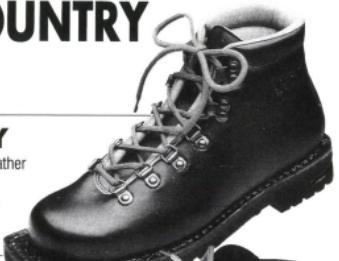
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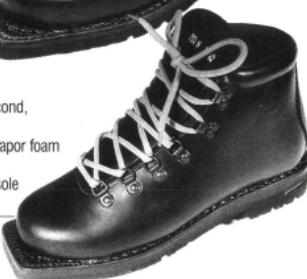
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the action of the pole may produce shoulder dislocations (if the pole becomes stuck in the snow behind the skier) or quite debilitating injury to the thumb in the event of the pole levering the thumb away from the index finger in a fall.

Trip planning is an essential element in reducing the chance of injury. The incidence of injury increases greatly after 2 pm, or after two hours of continuous skiing, when fatigue becomes apparent. An early start to a big day of touring will decrease the likelihood of being caught out on icy terrain at the end of the day. Similarly, route planning that makes use of sunny aspects early and late in the day will help you to avoid icy terrain. Regular rests will give tiring muscles time to recover.

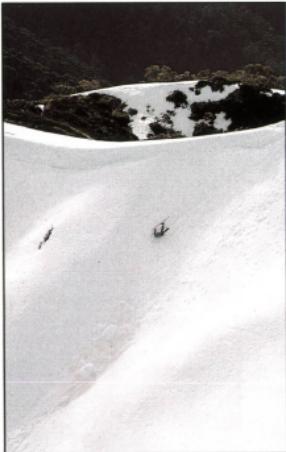
Training is one of the most effective things a skier can do to decrease the risk of injury. The various benefits of training can be exploited not only to decrease the incidence of injury, but also to make skiing more pleasurable. It's difficult to enjoy the ever expanding views when you're grunting and wheezing up a slope, worried about persistent calf pain. Bear

in mind that the training programme should be highly specific to the sport. There is a big difference between the ideal programme for a resort Telemarker who only skis lifts and that for a long-distance track skier. The former requires mostly anaerobic capacity (typically achieved through short-endurance, high-intensity work) whereas the latter needs aerobic fitness (lower intensity, longer duration). Someone engaging in different types of cross-country skiing needs both.

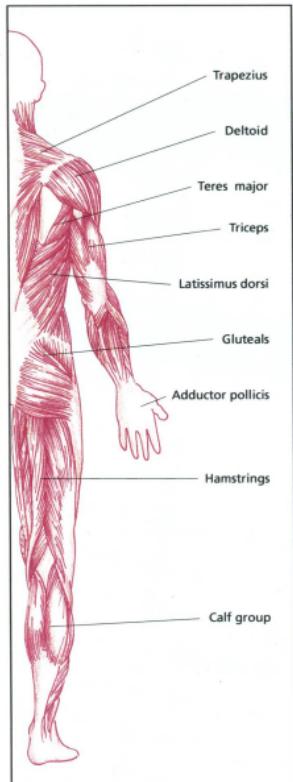
Endurance training (running, cycling, roller-skating and roller-blading) is best done at 70 per cent of your maximized heart rate. This is equal to $70/100 \times (220 - x)$, where x is your age in years. This pulse rate should be maintained for 20 minutes or longer, three or more times a week. Slow the heart rate and increase the duration for greater training of aerobic capacity—as would be required for long-distance touring, for example.

In designing an exercise programme to increase strength, it is important to exercise the muscle groups required for normal skiing activity as well as those which protect against

injury. A summary of the muscles used in normal diagonal striding and double-poling is shown in the first table on page 33. Additional muscles that protect against injury are shown in the second table on page 33. These two groups should be strengthened by working them against resistance for between one and three sets of 10 to 20 repetitions, with one minute's rest between sets. The resistance can



David Rogers generating a few abnormal forces on the North-west Spur of Mt Feathertop, Victoria. Matt Darby



be provided by free weights, rubber or bungy-cord resistors, or isokinetic (hydramag type) machines. The muscles should be exercised to the point at which a 'burning' sensation or fatigue is felt; the correct level can be achieved by varying the resistance. Before and after working these muscle groups it is important that you stretch to maintain or improve your flexibility. There are some good texts which describe various exercises, or you can ask at a gym or speak to a physiotherapist. Better still, join one of the ski-fitness classes run by some gyms, by ski clubs (usually racing oriented) or, in Victoria, by the Australian Physiotherapy Association. This is easier than planning your own programme; and the social contact and the cost both provide incentive to persevere.

You drive to the snow in a warm car, more or less immobile for several hours. On arrival at your chosen destination, it's fairly cold but you don't bother to put on extra layers as you know that soon you'll be sweating up a hill. You load a large pack on your back, perhaps with skis protruding from the top. All this takes a while, and you're quite cold by the time you leave the car. You surge on up the hill, desperate to warm up. As you bend to get the ski tips under a branch, you feel a pain in the back of your thigh. You wonder why.

The problem is that cold, tight muscles and joint structures are highly susceptible to

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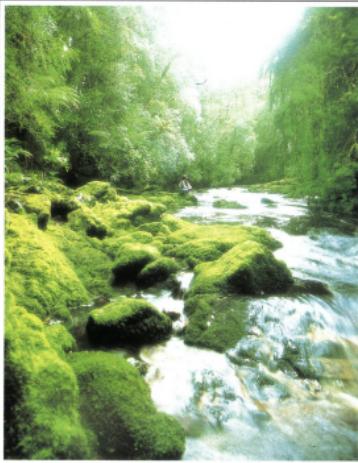
Of course, there are many other adventures to enjoy such as the

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injury. The answer is to warm up and stretch every day before you ski. And, no, this isn't for wimps. The same applies if you're base-camping. Any warming-up procedure will increase the blood supply to peripheral muscles and prepare them for work to be done. Passive warming may include the use of a warm hut or tent, or may be as simple as wearing sufficient clothing to keep you warm until exercise begins. Active warming will generate heat from within by gently raising your metabolic rate. This exercise should be done against little or no resistance—by light jogging on the spot, for example, or even light skiing without a pack. The aim is to awaken the muscles gently—not to blast them into oblivion before they know what's happening. Stretching should take place when you feel that you have warmed up adequately. Muscle groups that should be stretched include

calves, hamstrings, quadriceps, hip flexors, gluteals, lateral abdominals, triceps, latissimus dorsi and pectoralis major. Shoulder stretches, trunk flexion and trunk extension stretches are also useful. Each stretch position should be held for a minimum of 15 seconds to give the muscle a chance to accommodate to its new length. This whole warming and stretching procedure may take up to 15 minutes to complete, but an injury might take up the rest of your ski holiday.

If you follow these guide-lines and still manage to injure yourself, what should you do? Musculo-skeletal injuries including sprains, strains and bruises result from impact to, or stretching and tearing of, ligaments, muscles and tendons. These injuries will respond well to the 'RICE programme' within the first 48 hours after injury.

R Rest is required for a soft-tissue injury to begin to heal, and to prevent further stress to the injured part.

I Ice is applied (you can use snow) to the affected area for 15–20 minutes each hour to minimize swelling and bleeding into the tissues. The ice should be inside a plastic bag or a layer of cloth to prevent the possibility of an ice 'burn'. Note that any threat to core-temperature maintenance takes precedence over icing.

C Compression with an elasticized bandage will help to control swelling. This is particularly useful with injuries to peripheral joints such as ankles, knees and wrists.

E Elevation of the affected area will promote fluid drainage from the injury site. Ideally, the injured area should be supported in a comfortable position above the heart to make use of gravity as an aid to fluid return. During the same 48-hour period it is advisable to avoid the 'HARM factors'.

H Heat directly applied to the injury will increase bleeding into the tissues, and complicate bruising and swelling.

A Alcohol taken internally will act as a vasodilator (it will widen blood vessels) and will contribute to increased swelling.

R Return to the injuring activity will probably worsen the situation as further damage to the already weakened area is highly likely. (This may be difficult to avoid in a back-country situation.)

M Massage of the injured site will increase swelling and bleeding by promoting increased blood flow.

It may not be possible to avoid a return to skiing if evacuation should be required; and if other more serious injuries are present, treat them before you worry too much about soft-tissue injuries. But you will recover more quickly from an isolated soft-tissue injury if you follow the above recommendations. When you return from your trip you should seek advice from a qualified professional familiar with the treatment of sport injuries who can help to speed your recovery. Always remember, though, that prevention is better than cure, and get into shape before the season begins. ■

Stuart Imer is a physiotherapist who works in private practice in Melbourne and is active in the 'Learn Fit to Ski' programme run by the Australian Physiotherapy Association. He has been an avid skier for more than 15 years and holds an NCIS Assistant Instructor qualification.

WILD IDEAS

Muscles used in diagonal striding and poling

Muscle group	Action	Ski function
Abdominals	Trunk flexion (forwards bending)	Double-poling; stabilizing trunk
Erector spinae	Trunk extension (backwards bending)	Thrust in kick phase; stabilizing trunk
Gluteals; hamstrings	Hip extension (straightening)	Kick phase
Iliopsoas; rectus femoris	Hip flexion (bending)	Leg return after kick phase
Quadriceps	Knee extension (straightening)	Kicking; stabilizing ski in turns
Tibialis anterior	Ankle dorsiflexion (foot towards face)	Ski return after kick
Calf	Ankle plantar flexion (toe away from face)	Kicking (toe-off phase)
Rhomboids; trapezius	Scapula retraction (shoulder-blade stabilization)	Poling
Deltoid; latissimus dorsi; triceps; teres major	Shoulder extension (backwards movement of arm)	Poling
Triceps	Elbow extension (straightening)	Poling

Muscles with a protective function

Muscle group	Action	Effect
Quadriceps	Medial collateral ligament/interior cruciate ligament stabilizer	Supplements breaking strength of knee ligaments
Vastus medialis obliquus (VMO)	Major kneecap (patella) stabilizer	Resists patella dislocation; encourages efficient biomechanics
Pes anserinus	Medial knee stabilizer	Resists forces involved when catching an inside edge
Subscapularis; anterior deltoid; pectoralis major	Anterior shoulder stabilizer	Resists shoulder dislocation
Adductor pollicis	Thumb stabilizer (ulnar collateral ligament)	Resists damage to thumb ligaments

WILD SKI TOURING



Mt FEATHERTOP

Victoria's most spectacular peak also happens to have some of the State's best skiing; by *Glenn Tempest*



Viewed from across the high country, Mt Feathertop (1922 metres), with its remarkable, wave-like summit ridge, stands in sharp contrast to all its neighbours. Victoria's second-highest peak, it lies isolated to the west of the Bogong High Plains in the middle of the well-known Razorback ridge. During the winter months Mt Feathertop takes on the appearance of a billowing sail, a ribbon of

These days Mt Feathertop is usually approached in winter by one of four routes: they vary in difficulty and length, and the choice is largely determined by the nature of the trip. Some give relatively quick access to the summit area; others are spectacular and scenic ski tours in their own right.

The Razorback. The southern section of the Razorback ridge forms one of the

white-out. Most of the route is above the tree-line and bears the full brunt of any cold south-westerly fronts. It can be very difficult to find adequate shelter for much of its length, and ice often makes skiing difficult and dangerous. The slopes, particularly on the eastern side, are quite steep and are prone both to cornicing and to frequent slides after heavy snowfalls.

A ski traverse of the Razorback is best started from the Mt Hotham end and completed with a descent of the Bungalow Spur to Harrietville. Park at the pull-in at Diamantina Hut on the Harrietville-Mt Hotham road. Done this way, the tour will require a car shuttle unless you leave your car in Harrietville and catch the Mt Hotham bus up to the start of the route. Otherwise, you must return from Federation Hut the way you came. With average touring packs and in good conditions, the ski across to Federation Hut and Mt Feathertop can be comfortably completed in a day. If the weather gets rough, High Knob often provides good snow-cave possibilities and snow scoops into which to dig a tent. Allow a further half a day to descend Bungalow Spur to Harrietville.

Bungalow Spur is named after the Mt Feathertop Bungalow, which was constructed in 1924. This hut was planned as a forerunner to a much bigger hotel which was to have been built once a road was cut to the top, but this never



Left That man in the yellow shirt, Michael Hampton, catches the light and takes to the air on the Razorback, with Mt Hotham in the background. **Right**, Mt Feathertop in winter perfection, from near Little Mt Feathertop. **Opposite**, Telemark skiers dropping off Mt Feathertop's North-west Spur, scene of many long, spectacular runs. **Previous pages**, a skier on the sinuous crest of the North-west Spur. *Glenn Tempest*

white standing firm against the oncoming southerly winds. A plume of snow can often be seen wisping off the top on cold, blustery days.

Balanced along Mt Feathertop's undulating crown, one of the country's few genuinely alpine summits, hangs a line of menacing cornices. The summit is a magnet for adventurous cross-country skiers. Snow and ice climbers are also attracted by its pyramid-like appearance and find cold comfort amongst its many icy gullies and long, easy alpine ridges.

Mt Feathertop was probably given its descriptive name in the early 1850s by two local stockmen, Jim Brown and Johnny Wells. This adventurous and colourful pair also named the Razorback and many other prominent features across the Bogong High Plains. The first recorded winter ascent of Mt Feathertop was made in 1889 by members of the Bright Alpine Club, then an active force in the exploration of Victoria's snow-fields. The summit team arrived at the top roped together and using rudimentary snow-shoes instead of skis.



most enjoyable ski tours in the State. Only 11 kilometres long, its roller-coaster ridge top rarely drops below 1700 metres and reaches a high point of just over 1800 metres at High Knob. In clear weather skiers are rewarded with some of the finest views in the Victorian Alps.

Despite its popularity, the Razorback has a justifiable reputation as a serious and demanding undertaking in bad weather. Even though the ridge is quite narrow, skiers can still manage to become geographically embarrassed during a

eventuated. For many years the bungalow was managed by the Victorian Railways as a tourist destination. However, as the only ways of approaching it were on foot or by horseback, its popularity gradually waned. Finally, like many other similar structures across the Alps, and beyond, the bungalow was burnt down in the devastating bushfires of 1939.

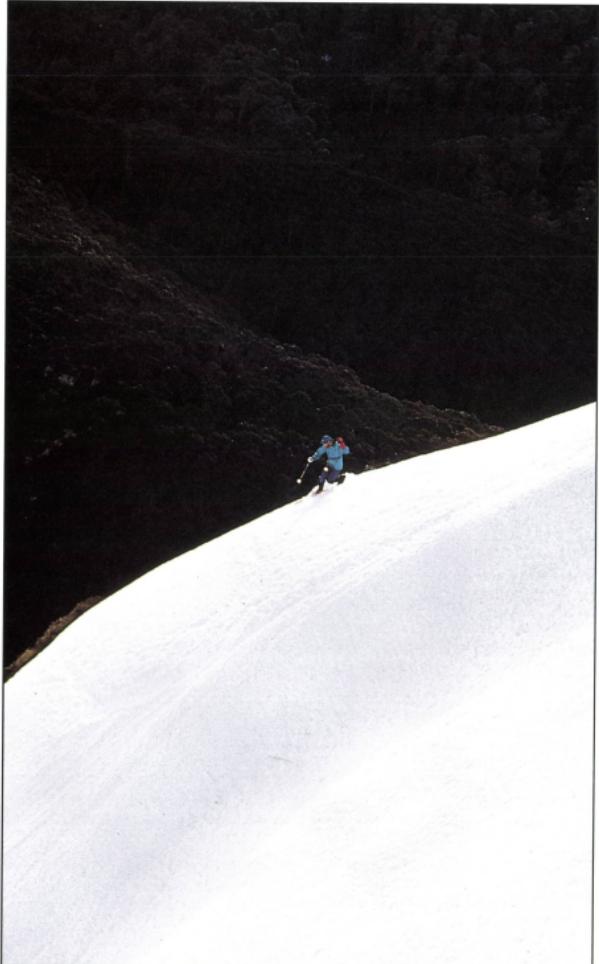
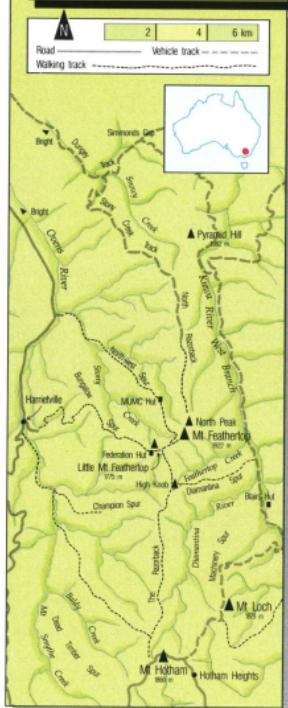
The track itself had been cut earlier, initially by miners and then mainly by members of the Harrietville Progress



Association. Despite a vertical gain in height of over 1300 metres from the township of Harrietville, the track is carefully contoured; long, but with a surprisingly relaxed gradient. During the winter months the track is often covered in snow well below the old bungalow site. At the tree-line and only two kilometres from the summit is Federation Hut, a small emergency refuge built in 1969. The area surrounding the hut is a popular campsite for winter ski parties. In bad weather, however, the site is not as well protected as many seem to think, and tents should be tucked securely amongst the trees near the hut.

From Federation Hut a broad snow bowl leads up to Mt Little Feathertop (1775 metres) and on to the saddle below Mt Feathertop's west ridge. The final climb is quite steep until it gains the gently undulating summit crest. Stay clear of the dangerous cornices which balance precariously over the south-eastern faces. These have claimed lives in the past and could do so again. Whilst the ski to Mt Feathertop's summit is easy and straightforward in good snow, be aware that icy conditions can turn this ridge

Mt Feathertop



The North-west Spur again. Telemarker David Rogers has it all to himself. **Matt Darby, Right**, two skiers keep a respectful distance from Mt Feathertop's summit cornice, with the Razorback and Mt Hotham beyond. **Above right**, fresh snow and sunshine. Stewart Spooner and Rune Petersen enjoy one of those days which make it all worth while. **Tempest**

into a dangerous place. Skis may have to be left behind and exchanged for crampons and an ice axe.

The North-west Spur. Starting from the trout farm on the Harrietville road, this is another famous approach particularly noted for its steepness. The well-known Melbourne University Mountaineering Club Hut is situated just above the tree-line on the North-west Spur. Constructed in 1966, this unusual

geodesic dome shelter is, unfortunately, still highly visible in the sun due to its reflective nature. The MUMC Hut was built partly because many Australian climbers had died in the New Zealand Alps during the preceding ten years. Both the climbing press and the general media at the time made it quite clear that young Australians were not adequately prepared for the greater technical difficulty and alpine severity of climbing in New Zealand's mountains. It was hoped that the MUMC Hut would serve as a convenient base for climbers to develop their ice-climbing skills. These days climbers rarely visit the hut although it is a popular stopping-off point for skiers and walkers. The final

narrow section of the North-west Spur to Mt Feathertop's summit is both exposed and steep. In hard-ice conditions this route makes a fine, easy, alpine ridge climb, requiring the use of crampons, rope and ice axes.

The North Razorback. This, the northernmost extension of the Razorback proper, is by far the least-used winter access route to Mt Feathertop. It is regarded more as an interesting ski tour than as a fast approach. After leaving the Ovens Valley Highway at the old gold-mining settlement of Germantown, follow the Dungey Track and then the Stony Creek Track. Unless you intend to walk all the way, you will need a four-wheel-drive vehicle for this approach. How far it is possible to drive depends on the condition of both the road and the snow. It should be stressed that a vehicle left at or near to the snow-line could be stuck there for the rest of the winter after a heavy snowfall. The ski route along the gradually ascending North Razorback provides refreshing views of Mt Bogong, the Fainters and the Niggerheads as well as an unusual aspect of Mt Feathertop itself. The final climb up Mt Feathertop's north ridge is perhaps the most spectacular on the peak. In bad weather it is possible to traverse the north-western flank of the mountain to join the North-west Spur.

carve sharper than Zorro and *never* fall over. Two of Victoria's most notorious ski gullies, Avalanche and Hellfire, can be found hiding on the south-east face. These two savage, parallel scars cut deeply down through numerous steep rock bands and into the heavily forested

out of an aeroplane without a parachute. Like any narrow gully runs, where extreme physical abuse is likely, it's probably not a bad idea to climb up from below first and check the snow conditions. On the same face beyond Hellfire Gully are any number of steep, scary



Most skiers who undertake a winter ascent of Mt Feathertop for the first time are struck by its steepness. Having skied up the west ridge in good snow, many will still prefer to walk back down to easier ground carrying their skis. There are no easy ski descents off the summit.

If you are one of those few attracted to steep chutes and narrow snow corridors entirely on the wrong side of sane, Feathertop is definitely your ski asylum. However, it is of enormous value here to be able to jump-turn on a five-cent piece,

West Kiewa valley below. In rare perfect conditions, Avalanche and Hellfire are regarded as formidable undertakings; in any other circumstances, they no doubt spell suicide. Both these chutes, and many of the less well known but equally steep runs nearby, require a high degree of commitment. A pair of self-arrest handles and a good life-insurance policy might be worth considering, too. The first few turns into any of these gullies are probably the closest an Australian Telemark skier will ever get to jumping

chutes. Some drop off down into Hellfire itself while others lie in wait on the far side of the North Peak.

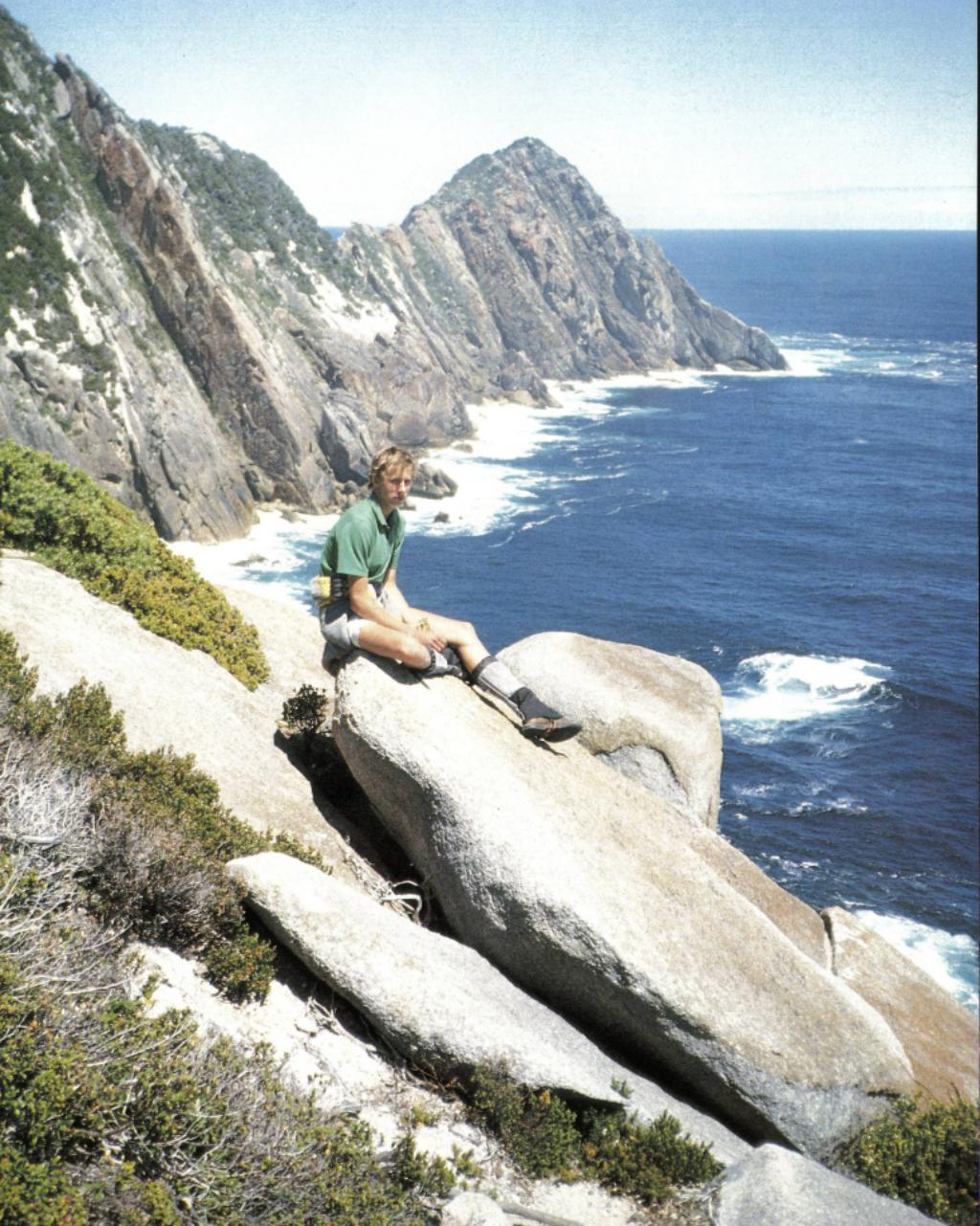
Challenging runs can also be found on the northern and north-western faces. These steep, open slopes are generally of a consistent angle with the added comfort of a hazard-free run-out at the bottom. Beware of the sastrugi ice mushrooms which seem to litter this side of the mountain.

The more frequently skied runs are those dropping off the lower southern side of the west ridge. These fine, wide-open ribs and shallow gullies are the ones viewed from the Razorback for most of its length. In good snow conditions the skiing is even better than it looks.

Despite the attractions of Feathertop's shapely summit, it is the nearby slopes and the Razorback that attract the majority of Telemark skiers. There are intermediate runs in the open area just above Federation Hut. There are also plenty of short, north-facing runs from the top of Mt Little Feathertop, and some excellent tree skiing close by. The Razorback itself provides many enjoyable ski descents along its more sheltered eastern side. The best and most interesting runs are concentrated around High Knob and Twin Knobs at the junction of the Razorback with the prominent Diamantina Spur. ■

Glenn Tempest (see Contributors in Wild no 4) has been a Special Adviser to Wild since our second issue. A renowned raconteur, climber and mountain photographer, Glenn is an experienced and enthusiastic cross-country skier.

WILD BUSHWALKING



TASMANIA'S SOUTH COAST

For the hardy...and not so hardy

SOUTH-WEST CAPE

Spectacular off-track
wilderness walking,
by Marcus Hardie

South-west Tasmania is renowned for its rain forests, rugged mountains, untouched beaches, button-grass plains, bad weather, mud and more mud.

The three of us had been drawn to the South-west Cape area by the thought of remote, untouched beaches separated by mountain ranges and button-grass plains, in mainly trackless country with few other people.

We arrived at Hobart airport and were flown from there to Melaleuca over the spectacular Eastern Arthurs. The landing-ground is little more than a dirt strip, maintained at that time by Deny King, who lived in the South-west from before the Second World War until his death in 1991. We found him in his vegetable patch, picking raspberries. Friend to countless bushwalkers, he seemed glad to talk and gave us some valuable advice on the route to New Harbour.

Early the next morning we were greeted by Deny on the track that led toward the airstrip. We left Melaleuca, avoiding the muddy staked track to Cox Bight, and headed out across the button-grass plains. We reached George Creek, where we picked up the staked route through the scrub at the head of New Harbour Bay.

The unusually warm Tasmanian weather and calm seas allowed James and me to go swimming in the not too freezing water. After lunch we climbed a steep headland and descended into Hidden Bay for the night.

The following day we climbed into Ketchem Bay, a renowned crayfish



The South-west Cape campsite is exposed and poorly drained but in pristine condition. **Opposite**, a walker in front of the remote and rugged headland of South-west Cape. *Marcus Hardie*

haunt. Unfortunately, we did not find any, but another group of walkers were given four freshly caught and cooked crays by friendly fishermen. We found a small sea cave, which led nowhere. We climbed the Amy Range for a spectacular view of the coast. Descending into Wilson Bight for the night, we camped in the fern gully at the western end of the beach, where we again went swimming.

The next day was New Year's Eve. We departed Wilson Bight, climbing the southern end of the South-west Cape Range toward Mt Karamu. Avoiding the summit, we bashed through thick scrub until we found a rough track that led across the cape. The South-west Cape campsite is a very exposed, poorly drained series of cushion plants growing on ground-water seeps. The camp itself

is in pristine condition without signs of previous use.

We attempted to climb the final section of the cape by the western ridge. After two hours of bashing through horizontal melaleuca scrub, we had gone just over half a kilometre and were licking our wounds when we found the ridge on which we were meant to be. Twenty minutes later, we were back in camp.

We celebrated the New Year at sunset upon a granite headland adjoining the campsite. Max and I decided to bivouac on the cushion plants for the night. The water at the camp seemed to flow through a salty aquifer and we had to carry fresh water from near Mt Karamu, one and a half kilometres away.

On New Year's Day we got lost in thick melaleuca scrub on our return to Mt Karamu. Two hours later we had travelled the three kilometres to the summit and had set out along the South-west Cape Range. The weather was unbearably hot but the clear day

afforded us fantastic views of Port Davey and Mt Rugby as well as the Eastern and Western Arthurs. We traversed the range until we picked up the staked route that led to Window Pane Bay, the most beautiful of all the beaches on South-west Cape. Unfortunately, the beach was littered with stinging bluebottles so swimming was impossible.

The next morning we departed late, easily picking up the staked track to the most isolated of the South-west's beaches—Noyhener Beach. We descended from the track on to the rocky platform near Faults Bay. After lunch we made our way past a huge dead seal to the white sands of Noyhener Beach. Noyhener is unique in having a massive natural sand blow-out behind the primary dune. We camped beside the sheltered but mosquito-ridden Murgab Creek before exploring the beach and Chatfield Point.



South-west Cape and the Southern Ocean from near Mt Karamu. **Left**, not much headroom for Max in this sea cave, Ketchem Bay. **Hardie**

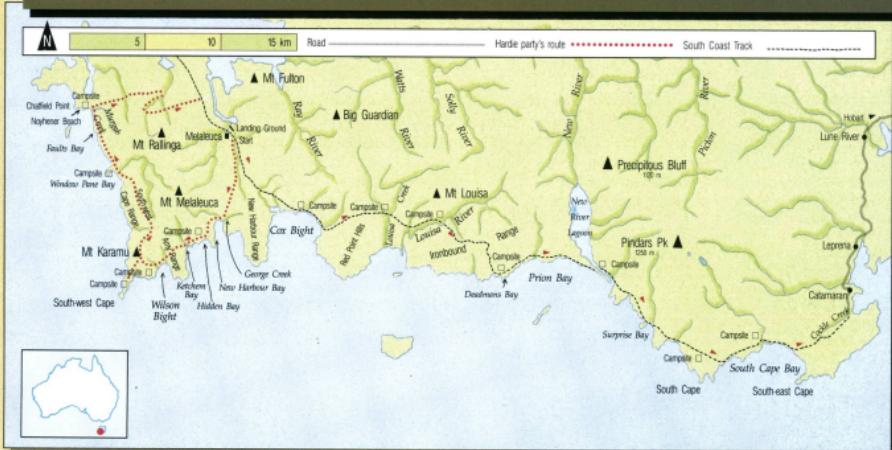


James and I went for a swim, which was interrupted when I was stung painfully on the knee by a bluebottle—an unforgettable experience!

We set out early the next day with the intention of doing two easy days' walking in one to attack our food a day early. It was after all only 16 kilometres to Melaleuca. Eleven and a half hours of trackless scrub, two mountain ranges, a swamp, three creek crossings and a very territorial tiger snake later, we staggered into one of the huts at Melaleuca, totally exhausted, to conclude our walk of the cape. ■

Marcus Hardie is a student of geography and geology at Monash University, Victoria, and is a member of the Monash Bushwalking Club and Conservation Group. He is a keen bushwalker and caver.

Tasmania's south coast



THE SOUTH COAST TRACK

Sandy Robertson describes this well-known walk from the perspective of a walker who is six months pregnant

For several years my husband and I had been keen to walk Tasmania's South Coast Track. I don't consider myself to be a hardened bushwalker although I have done several walks overseas: the Routeburn Track in New Zealand, the Inca Trail in Peru, the Torres del Paine circuit in Chile, and the Annapurna Circuit in Nepal. I had never been to Tasmania and was eager to go, but there was a problem. At the time we intended to go, I would be six months pregnant.

A group of friends agreed to go with us. We organized a flight to the start of the walk at Melaleuca and bought the necessary maps and track notes, but I still had lingering doubts. Would I make the distance? Would it be harmful to the baby? What if something were to go wrong? We began to seek out any useful information. We received plenty of advice, much of it contradictory, and heard lots of reasons why I should not attempt the trip while pregnant—but all from people who had never done the walk. Where to find someone with experience of the track?

We finally met someone who had walked the South Coast Track eight years before. He told us that it had been pretty hard going, and didn't seem too enthusiastic about my plan to attempt it, but he had also heard that a lot of work had been done on the track recently. Duck-boards had been put down on the muddy sections, he said. Sounded good to me. I felt confident that if there wasn't much mud, I shouldn't have too much trouble.

We read the track notes. They say that the South Coast Track is one of the easier extended walks in Tasmania, and recommend taking eight days to allow for bad weather or lazing around on beaches. I liked the sound of the last bit and began to think I could do it, particularly if I could spend time stretched out beside sandy inlets each day. The nagging question in my mind was, what would happen if something should go wrong? I knew that if I went into labour, the baby (at six months) would not survive anyway—but would we be able to get help? My doctor, who had been cautious at first, finally gave me the go-ahead and said, 'Have a great

time'. I decided then to stop worrying and to find security in the healthy and easy pregnancy I'd enjoyed to this stage.

Seven of us prepared to depart from Hobart by light plane to Melaleuca. From there we would walk to Cockle Creek over eight days. We had shopped wisely and divided the food amongst the six others. I was unable to carry a pack as heavy as theirs for several reasons: during pregnancy, ligaments and joints become very loose and flexible and can easily be damaged; more energy and

nancy; I hoped it was not a sign of things to come.

The track began as a well-worn, firm, sandy path but within 30 minutes it had deteriorated into very muddy button-grass plains. At this point we realized that the walk was not going to be as easy as we had thought. The mud was soon knee-deep in places and we tried to balance on tufts of grass and hop from side to side. Where were all the duck-boards? Soon it became very frustrating. It was impossible to get any momentum



Is this the queue? Crossing the Louisa River with its peat-stained water, characteristic of Tasmania's wild streams. Sandy Robertson collection

more oxygen are used so one tires more easily; balance is affected by the change in the centre of gravity; and the added weight of the baby meant that I was about ten kilos above my normal weight. I watched the others load up with packs containing food, tents, sleeping gear, clothing for hot, wet, cold and even snowy conditions. I had a mercifully light pack containing some clothing, two Therm-a-Rests, water, and plastic cups and plates. I also had a supply of barley sugar, which my doctor had recommended as my energy requirements would be greater than normal. My pack felt heavy enough to me but I could hardly complain when I looked at the loads of the others. There was no way that I could have carried the weight of their packs and I knew that they were all carrying far more than they should have to compensate for me—my poor husband most of all.

We departed on a cloudy, wet day but the flight was still spectacular. The pilot flew very low beneath the clouds so we could enjoy the magnificent coastal views. During the flight I had my first experience of sickness in the whole preg-

going when walking, and a lot of strain was placed on knees and ankles. Our second realization was that whilst the track notes said two hours, it would probably take us four—not so much due to my condition as to that of the track. I'd had faith in my husband's powers of endurance and thought that he would be able to run out in a day if necessary. Now I was not so sure.

After about five hours we made it to Cox Bight with aching shoulder, neck and back muscles, and feeling exhausted. (And this was probably the easiest day's walk!) However, we had a lovely campsite and a good meal with fresh vegetables. We sat around an open fire and gave each other neck and shoulder massages before getting an early night and a great sleep.

All the campsites were in lovely settings, close to fresh water. These nights were a highlight to me, particularly the evening of 6 January at Louisa River. It was our first wedding anniversary. We all had wet boots and socks from river crossings so we rigged up a clothes line over a fire. (The ranger stationed at Melaleuca had assured us that open fires were permitted for most of the walk.) Our groomsman was with us and he was given the not-too-onerous task of making

an appropriately humorous speech. He looked less than elegant in striped long johns as he orated grandly from a tree stump in front of a backdrop of wet socks. Our friends drank cheap port from plastic cups and we, the oval-bellied bride and the expectant groom, appreciated it thoroughly.

The next few days brought variable track conditions, steep hills, lots of muddy button-grass plains and spectacular



Harder than childbirth? With a reduced load in her pack, and taking extra care not to fall, Sandy Robertson walked the South Coast Track while six months pregnant. *Robertson collection*

scenery. Our main focus was on the Ironbound Range on day four, as we'd been warned that this would be the hardest day. We could see the Ironbounds towering in the distance—900 metres straight up, a traverse across the top, and 900 metres down to sea level in one day. I wondered how I'd go. I was much slower than the others on steep ascents and as I needed more oxygen, I tended to get puffed more easily. I was also slow going down hills, being especially careful not to fall.

At first, we mistook the track up the Ironbounds for a waterfall! It was hard to imagine the track being that steep but, sure enough, it was. After an early rise and a good breakfast, and armed with a supply of barley sugar and water, the challenge began. After two hours of vertical climbing, I decided that childbirth would be easy compared with this. At least it was good practice for the

puffing and panting! The higher we climbed, the worse the weather became. Drizzle became sleet and almost snow and we needed our wet- and cold-weather gear. It took us four hours to get to the top, then another hour for the traverse. It was barren and rocky, totally exposed to the elements and as hailstones blasted on our backs, we kept our heads down and avoided the enlarging waterways. We were all very wet, cold and hungry, and relieved when we finally came across a fibreglass 'igloo' we'd heard about. We stopped there for lunch.

After soup, dry biscuits and fruit cake, we set off for the downhill leg, hoping that it would be easier than the uphill battle. In the constant rain it turned out to be the hardest part of the whole walk. It took us five long hours to reach the campsite at Deadmans Bay. The track was muddy, and many large tree roots and stumps in such slippery conditions required my full concentration and effort. This arduous descent took us through one of the most beautiful temperate rain forests in the world, with lovely wild orchids and tree ferns. We were all slipping and losing our balance and going very slowly. I had to be particularly cautious and had a terrible fear of falling over and doing a serious injury to myself or, worse still, to the baby. I felt like crying at one stage, thinking we'd never make it, and it only took a slip in the mud and a twisted knee for the tears to flow! It was probably a good release of tension. All I wanted was to lie down on a comfy bed with a cup of hot tea, and sleep. I kept wondering how long days of constant walking and little rest were affecting the baby. The others in the group were also finding it difficult, and the added weight of their packs intensified the effect of the downhill pounding on knees and ankles.

Within sight of Deadmans Bay at last, the track became a creek and we waded knee-deep through mud and water. A wet, bedraggled and very exhausted group made it to the campsite by half-past five after ten hours of solid walking. Each of us found at least one leech that had somehow penetrated through overpants, gaiters, long pants and socks to be sucking somewhere on our legs. We finally got tents set up and a fire going despite heavy drizzle and had a rehydrated meal, all too exhausted to talk or be entertaining. I was in bed by seven, totally worn out but at the same time relieved that the worst part was over: I'd survived the Ironbounds!

Often, when a group gets weary and morale drops, something will happen which lifts the gloom. The next morning, one of our group went off to shave by the bay. A group of fishermen saw him and rowed over, bearing a sack containing nine live crayfish! We had no fresh food left and the prospect of a meal of fresh crayfish was sheer luxury. Although we had

heard of such things happening, we couldn't believe our luck. But who would carry the crays? And how were we to cook them in our small cooking-pots? We almost decided to give them to another group of walkers, but couldn't quite pass up such an opportunity; in the end we left six behind and took the three biggest with us. That night's meal was one to remember—after days of dehydrated food, fresh, succulent crayfish shared in good company. The fishermen also gave us the latest weather forecast and the scores in the Test match between Australia and England. This little bit of contact with the outside world reinforced the feeling of remoteness from civilization. How good it feels to be alone in the wilderness, with no sign of technology—apart from the rare stretch of welcome duck-board!

Our second-last day was one of the loveliest because we actually had time to laze around on a superb beach for an afternoon. I had thought that there would be more of this, but we had walked solidly for eight hours or more on most days. We set up camp in the early afternoon and in beautiful sunshine all found places to relax and do our own thing—explore, read, swim, chat or snooze.

On our eighth and final day we prepared to head to Cockle Creek to catch the bus back to Hobart. The track notes said it would take us three to four hours so we thought we had better allow ourselves six. We began walking at half-past six and had superb views of the sun rising over a mist-shrouded coastline. The sand soon became rocky shingle which made walking and balancing difficult, and at one point we had to scale a three-metre boulder. I didn't know exactly how I was going to do this. 'Flatten yourself against the rock, Sandy,' my friends said. Just how one does this when shaped like an egg and feeling as fragile as one still eludes me!

The last eight kilometres were an easy walk along duck-boards and I began to feel elated that it was almost over. We passed more walkers and asked about the looming Gulf War. The depressing news brought us back to reality sharply.

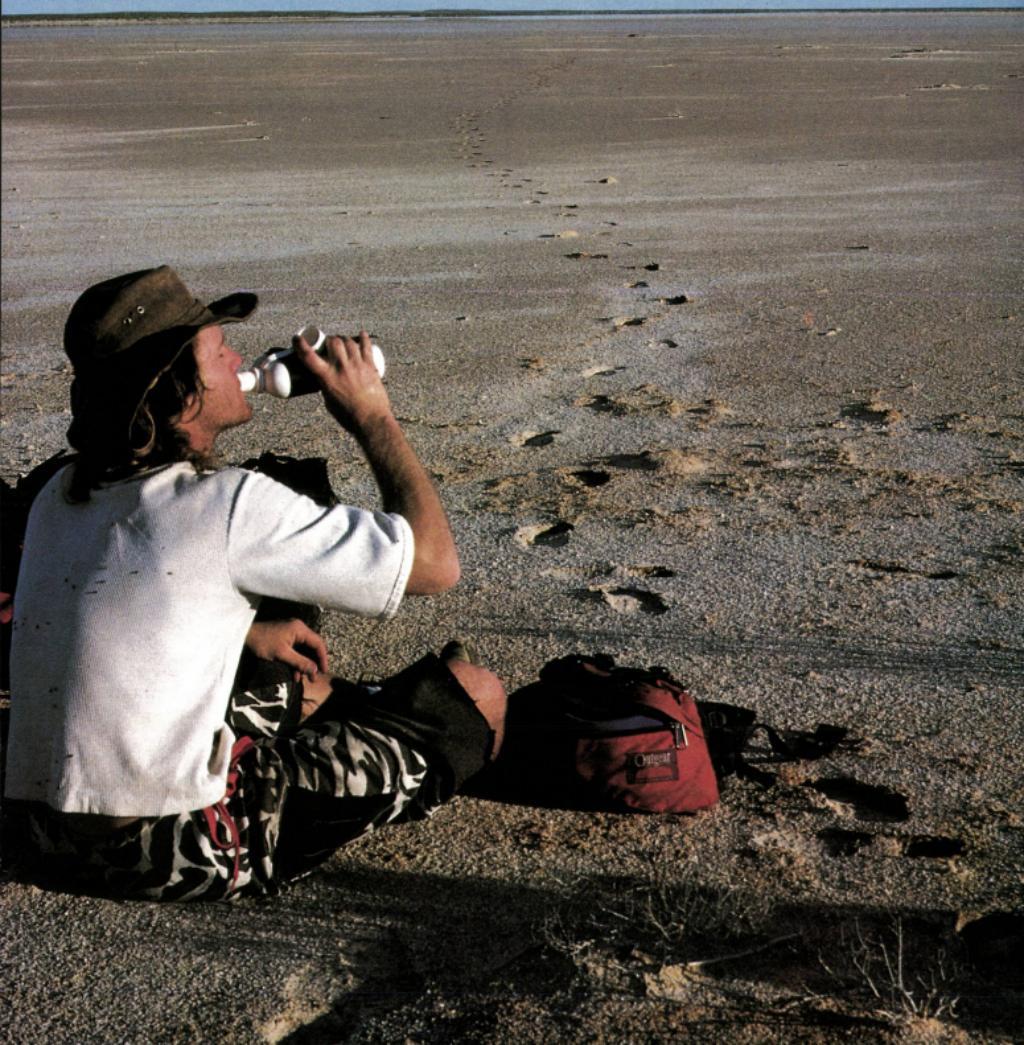
We arrived in Cockle Creek with an hour to spare. We felt a sense of achievement at having completed the walk without any major catastrophes. I also felt a sense of awe at having seen part of Tasmania's spectacular World Heritage Area, and wondered whether it would still be there for our child to see in years to come.

Postscript: on 19 April, three months and eight days after completing the South Coast Track, I gave birth to a healthy 3.9 kilogram boy. On reflection, I think the walk was harder. ■

Sandy Robertson is a primary teacher, and wrote this article while on leave after the birth of her son Jordan. She and her husband and son live in the Dandenong Ranges near Melbourne. She has walked in New Zealand, Nepal, Chile and Peru as well as in Australia.

FLAT EARTH

A walk to South Australia's Lake Eyre is definitely not 'your average bushwalk', as Sean Carnell discovered



As a city dweller born and bred, my working life revolves around the routines, commitments and deadlines that bind our society together. Usually, self-sufficiency seems an idle dream. Yet occasionally I indulge that dream in a minor way, lugging food and shelter around on my back for two weeks at a time through remote places; not quite self-sufficient but at least independent. I know then that for 14 days I am alone, responsible only to myself, and isolated from the burdens of society.

Being a bit of a homebody, I've done nearly all my bushwalking in Victoria and Tasmania, climbing spurs, descending gullies, following ridges, struggling up endless tracks in search of a view and a memory. Yet for all the days and weeks



The River Frome had flowed 50 metres wide only a few weeks before, but now was a silent graveyard. **Above right**, this view from the air shows how significant a feature even a three metre dune can be in such a flat landscape. **Far right**, Sean Carnell settles down for the night in 'his own little space'—a sleeping-bag in the middle of Lake Ellen. **Previous page**, 'leaving nothing but footprints'. Sean Carnell

I've spent in these fertile parts, my most vivid memories are those of a two-day walk in the central Australian desert: memories of isolation.

Two years ago Lake Eyre was full of water, and this was enough to justify a mid-year sightseeing trip by a group made up of photographers, a pilot, geologists, and some who were simply curious. Billed in the shearers' quarters at Muloorina Station, we daily endured the 40 kilometre drive to the lake or visited some other local attraction, returning each evening to witness yet another spectacular sunset across the unbelievably flat horizon.

That horizon fascinated me. Like the desire to see over a hill or round the next bend, I felt a compulsion to be 'out there'. The landscape seemed so empty in a way the high country never is. In the mountains, you always have a track to follow, a landmark to aim for, a river near which to camp. At Muloorina, once past the sheepyards, there was nothing; only Lake Eyre, 30 kilometres away. It was an almost unavoidable landmark, and what lay in between intrigued me, so I planned a two-day walk from the station to the lake.

Planning a route posed no problems at all. There were no obstacles, so I could simply have set a compass bearing and followed it directly to the lake's shore. However, as I wanted to avoid people and cars for those two days, I devised a dog's-leg route which would keep me away from the four-wheel-drive access

Plodding on, an occasional glance over my shoulder at the receding station showed that I was making some progress. Ahead of me, however, nothing much had changed. The temperature was comfortably in the mid-20s and a faint breeze brushed my skin. Above me, incredible cloud patterns would form



track and take me straight to Lake Frances and the centre of Lake Ellen (both dry), then north, up into the Price Peninsula.

The early morning departure was a fairly casual affair. It is difficult to feel that you are leaving a place when you know you will be able to see it for the next couple of hours just by looking over your shoulder. Slinging a pack full of fruit and water on to my back, I set out across the River Frome, a dry bed of rocks and pebbles beside the homestead. Only a few weeks earlier, the river had been a major watercourse up to 50 metres wide in places, but now it was a silent graveyard of uprooted trees and piles of dried reeds, its short but tempestuous life drained into Lake Eyre.

As I moved away from the dry river, the head-high vegetation began to thin out, opening up a view of that perfect horizon. A flock of galahs added a dusting of colour to the scene. They were the last birds or animals I would see during the walk—with one impressive exception.

Having set my compass, it was time to put it to use. I scanned the horizon, searching for anything that would serve as a landmark; there was nothing. In the middle distance were plenty of small bushes, but none stood out individually so I gradually drew my focus closer until I found a calf-high bush about 100 metres away. It would have to do. This pattern was to continue for most of the day, and soon became second nature. Having to make such constant reference to a compass was a new experience for me, but so was outback walking and, as a city kid, I was not taking any chances.

and then drift slowly eastward. Often my mind would drift with them and I would day-dream for a while, then suddenly remember where I was—surrounded by a vast expanse of desert, isolated and alone. At times I would stop in my tracks, stock still, not even breathing, just absorbing the silence.

After several hours of walking I began to think about lunch, but unconsciously I kept putting it off—as travellers often do—until a good spot should turn up. About half an hour later it dawned on me that there were not going to be any 'good spots' in this flat expanse so, laughing at my naivety, I sat down and had my break. After an hour of munching on apples, of day-dreaming and watching clouds, my thoughts turned to the dry lakes ahead and, eager to see them, I threw on my pack once more, took another bearing and walked on.

Eventually a slight imperfection appeared on the horizon ahead; after an age it grew to become a three metre high dune, lying diagonally across my path. The paradox of walking in such a flat landscape was that distant objects seemed to take an eternity to reach, yet because there were no steep hills or bush to negotiate I was able to cover ground very quickly. Once I had reached the dune its slope was barely noticeable, but instead of hard clay under my feet there was now soft, shifting sand, dotted with sparse vegetation. This dune was the first of several which lay ahead that afternoon, a sign that the lakes were not far away. They were also part of the hunting ground of two spectacular birds.

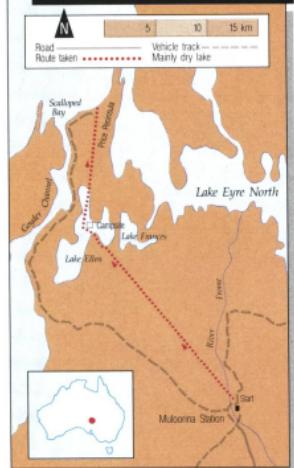
Cresting the dune, eyes to the ground, I heard a slow, regular, whooshing sound

and looked up in time to see a wedge-tailed eagle spreading its massive wings as it took to the air just 30 metres ahead, followed closely by its mate. I had never seen these birds at such close range before with their wings fully spread, and their size amazed me. They seemed to measure about two metres from wing-tip to wing-tip, which to me is *big*. (It's probably just the city kid in me again.) They slowly spiralled their way up into the sky and soon were just specks circling gradually away. I watched them until my eyes hurt from squinting, then continued happily on my way.

Several dunes later, a dry lake became visible ahead, a good landmark by which to try to gauge my position. By staying up on the dune it was possible to see the shape of the shoreline and compare it with the small sketch-map I had drawn up for the journey. My aim had been the southern tip of Lake Frances, and I seemed to be right on target. Somewhere close ahead lay Lake Ellen, the middle of which marked the point where my route changed direction. Eventually I reached this huge, dry pan and took one last compass bearing on the old heading, straight out into the void with nothing to aim for but the barely visible dune on the far side. I stepped over a line of dingo tracks and headed out.

Animal tracks turned out to be the main feature of this almost blank expanse, prints of emus and dingoes and the strange, three-pronged markings a kangaroo leaves when using its tail as a fifth leg. Most tracks led towards a shrinking area of dark sand at the head of the lake, evidence of the water that still lay in Lake Eyre but also a reminder that it would not be there for long.

Lake Eyre region



As I progressed further on to the pan, it became very obvious that I was just a speck on this landscape, a mere dot. My footprints stretched out endlessly behind me and in every other direction lay nothing but flat sand, edged with the thinnest strip of green. Feeling very vulnerable and exposed, I lost all sense of progress in the middle of that expanse. I seemed to be walking a treadmill, my position fixed between the distant horizons. For someone seeking isolation it was an awesome feeling, almost the ultimate; I could not resist the urge to spend the night there.

It was a strange experience to settle down to eat and sleep in that desolate place. Very aware of my presence on the landscape, I could not feel that I was part of it. What did I know of the land around me? Perhaps the names of a few plants or animals, a few features of the geography, but what use were these in helping me to survive in this environment?

During my preparations for the evening I had already unconsciously tried to create a defensive little 'space' around me. To my discomfort, my city upbringing was making itself felt again. At night among hills and forests, I tend to seek this refuge by often using a tent even in mild weather, and by finding protective spaces with natural borders of rocks, trees and rivers. It is a habit very difficult to break, based on a fear of the unknown, and it raises a frustrating barrier: as soon as I claim a piece of space as 'mine', trying thereby to shield myself from all that is 'outside', I separate myself from the environment. However, when all you have is a sleeping-bag and a rucksack in the middle of a vast, dry lake, the concept of creating a personal space begins to seem a little foolish.

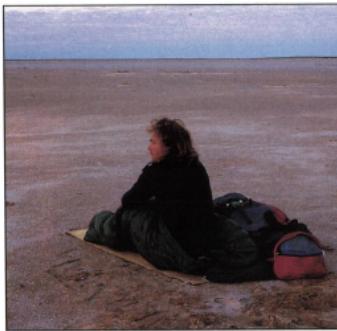
The most unsettling part of the evening was yet to come. After finishing my meal, I struggled into my sleeping-bag, lay on my back and watched the stars appear above me. It suddenly hit me how quiet this featureless plain really was: hitherto my own sounds had broken the silence, but now I was still. There were no birds or animals, no trees or plants, no other people, cars, aeroplanes: nothing. The air, too, was perfectly still. With just the flat earth below me and the cold stars above, my ears strained to hear something—anything. It was an uncanny sensation, like lying in tiny, padded cell, yet in reality I was surrounded by more empty space than I had ever experienced. Perfect isolation.

I woke several times that night, gradually relaxing my defences, sensing the movement of the earth by the passage of the stars and then by the slow, glorious dawn. Rising early, I enjoyed the sunrise, then quickly packed, set the new compass bearing and began to walk again, my ridiculously long shadow plodding along beside me.

The return to sparse vegetation at the far side of the lake bed was a welcome

change. I crested the dune, aligned my compass and, looking ahead, was surprised to see a single tree on the far horizon—perfectly in line with my bearing. Hardly able to believe my luck, I put my compass away and set out towards this distant friend.

Just over an hour later I finally reached it. The solitary tree in the middle of an endless horizon. After spending several fruitless minutes walking around in circles in search of the perfect photographic angle, I came to the conclusion that it looked much the same from every direction: a little tree in a very big space. And that, although it was easy to photo-



graph the tree, it was just about impossible to do justice to the vast space which surrounded it.

From this lonely tree my path lay towards a small depression on the horizon, and eventually to the crest of a dune, from where the salt water ocean of Lake Eyre North was revealed. After travelling through the impressive, dry, desert landscape, Lake Eyre itself came as a bit of an anticlimax. It looked very much like a summer beach on any Australian coast minus the waves, bikinis and board shorts.

I had hit the lake about 200 metres south of my target, a base camp set up on the shore by my companions. Trudging along the beach, anticipating my return to the city and its pressures, I thought about the impossibility of surviving out here for more than a few days without transport or outside help. I realized that my eager pursuit of isolation and independence, my freedom from the bonds of society, would be impossible without the food and equipment those bonds were able to provide.

My two-day jaunt may seem rather tame when compared with some of the epic adventures that have been featured in this magazine; yet the isolation and endless space that were the essence of those two days remain strong and unique memories. ■

Sean Carnell is a confirmed city dweller who daily risks life and limb on the streets of Melbourne as a bicycle courier to support his ambitions as an artist.

WILD CANOEING



APPALACHIAN ODYSSEY

The Siren song of the Chattooga River proved too strong for *John Wilde*

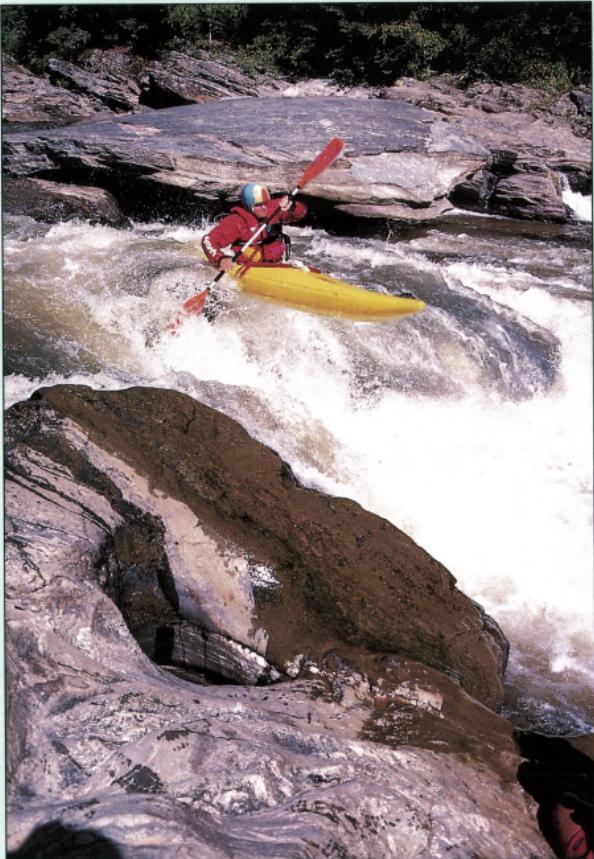
The novel *Deliverance* and the popular film of the same name were set on the Chattooga River, which forms part of the border between Georgia and South Carolina, in the USA. They brought amateurs to the river along with the experts, and for several years after the film's release during the early 1970s the number of drownings on the Chattooga made it the deadliest river in the USA. The Chattooga hurtles at freight-train speed through dozens of rapids, dropping 85 metres in the last ten kilometres before being enclosed by the Tugaloo Dam. Even hardened east-coast river runners regard the Chattooga section four as one of the wildest and best rivers in the Appalachian Mountains.

With a week to spare after the Canoe International Safety Seminar 90, we borrowed some boats from Nantahalla Outdoor Centre and set off to practise what we preach. Dressed in our harness buoyancy aids, with throw-bags and river knives at the ready, and paddling a selection of short 'play-boat' kayaks, the latest in safety and comfort, we attempted to emulate the *Deliverance* story of raw adventure.

A quick warm-up on Bull-slice rapid allowed us to sample the temperature of the water. We removed the first few layers of 'river protection' and began to relax and appreciate the river environment.

The first few kilometres provided some white water of grade 2-3 to play on, surrounded by pleasant forest and rocky beaches, the colours of the early autumn providing a picturesque backdrop to our antics. Spectacular reds and yellows from the deciduous trees blended well

Taking off from the launching pad to avoid the worst of Sock-em-Dog rapid—a 'real baddie' on the Chattooga River. **Opposite**, a sucker for punishment? Shaun carried his boat back up twice to enjoy all three routes through the dramatic Crack-in-the-Rock. All photos John Wilde



with the subtle greens of the many conifers, all indigenous to the area.

At the start we had filled in our registration cards with great care. To quote the poster-style river guide:

...carry your registration card with you on the river. The fines for not complying with US Forest Service rules and regulations are generally astronomical. [These] may seem to be a pain in the ass but they are for your protection. Prior to ranger supervision on the Chattooga, multitudes of raving lunatics could be seen riding into the sunset on ice chests, air mattresses etc. Make no mistake about it, Section IV is dangerous...A few good paddlers have lost their lives on this section, along with a number of other people who had no business being on the river, period. This is no place for white-water puberty rites.

We had our first taste of drama at Woodall Shoals (grade 6). After shooting the 'terminal' stopper with ease, we watched a raft get totally stuck in this dreaded hydraulic. I quickly exchanged my camera for a throw-bag. It was a classic river rescue. Most of the occupants of the raft disappeared overboard, spent some time recirculating in the hole and finally emerged in various states of panic, to be rescued by our kayaks further downstream. Meanwhile, having thrown my throw-bag to the rafting guide, I was in imminent danger of being pulled into the hole myself. I was on my own on the bank without a belay, trying to pull a swamped 16-foot raft out of a powerful hydraulic system. After several minutes of 'playing' the throw-rope, a better set-up was arranged from the far bank and the situation was defused. As I watched one of the British paddlers play-

ing in the hole a short time later, I finally plucked up the courage to risk a watery fate myself. It looked a relatively innocent stopper, but after four rolls and a thorough shaking I emerged with a new respect. I had considered getting out of my boat after the third roll, but even that

finish. The technique is to run the far right and use the final wave as a launching pad to skip over the hole. This sounds fine, but the practical application does not always proceed as smoothly as the theory. One of our party misjudged the line and landed nose first on a



Serious fun in a 'play hole' on the Chattooga.

would not have guaranteed safety in a situation of this kind. Pride prevailed, and I stayed in.

Seven Foot Falls (grade 4), Ravens Chute and Deliverance Rock were all passed with ease and we could contemplate the dramatic gorge we were entering—and speculate on why it might be that a huge eagle was following us down the river.

Corkscrew (grade 4) provided Dave with some fun in his open boat. Thanks to full air-bags, he survived a swamping and was able to navigate his somewhat water-logged craft to the bank. Crack-in-the-Rock (grade 4) gave us some good aerobatics—especially Shaun, who carried back up to shoot all three routes.

Sock-em-Dog (grade 5) is regarded as 'a real baddie', a two metre vertical drop, undercut, with a 'keeper hydraulic' to

submerged boulder. In such a situation she might easily have become dangerously pinned, but her short boat, with its bulbous nose, soon shifted and she was able to escape. Thank heaven for progress! A standard river kayak would almost certainly have stayed there.

Suddenly we emerged from a river in its prime, surrounded by pristine wilderness, on to the flat waters of Tugaloo Lake, full of drowned trees and empty beer cans left by fishermen in their launches. A flat, three-mile paddle to the ramp at the finish proved arduous. Already the top half of the dam is well silted, the water 15 centimetres deep or less, making progress slow and paddling difficult. ■

*John Wilde has canoed and kayaked extensively in Europe, North America, Asia and Australia. He led the Australian Sun Kosi expedition in 1981 (see the article in *Wild* no 1), and represented both the UK and Australia at World Slalom titles between 1979 and 1989. He has worked full time in the outdoors for 20 years and at present is director of outdoor education at Canberra Grammar School.*

Chattooga River



ALPINE WONDER

The high country of Victoria and New South Wales,
by *Jeremy Holland*



Mt Feathertop silhouetted
against a late afternoon sky,
from the Bogong High Plains,
Victoria.





Dramatic sunset colours over Mt Howitt, the Crosscut Saw, Mt Bugery and Mt Speculation, Victorian Alps. **Inset, top**, snow-gum trunk detail, Lake Mountain, Victoria. **Inset, bottom**, persistent snow-drifts in Kosciusko National Park, New South Wales.

AUSTRALIAN WILDLIFE AT RISK

Stephen Garnett discusses this alarming issue, and offers some suggestions



Since European settlement Australia has lost more mammals than any other equivalent land mass. In addition, many plants and over 20 varieties of birds have disappeared. A great number of those we have left are threatened with extinction. Fortunately it is now being recognized that our plants and animals are part of our heritage, an inheritance we should guard for our descendants.

As part of this recognition, organizations like the Endangered Species Unit of the Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service and the World Wide Fund for Nature have been sponsoring research to find species presumed lost, work out why species are declining and, most importantly, foster their recovery. The examples chosen here illustrate some

of the threats to plants and animals in Australia, describe some of the research results and tell you what is being done to ensure that our grandchildren have as much to appreciate in our bush as we have. Included are some for which we have as yet no answers. We can only hope the scientists and planners will work quickly enough, and have sufficient public support, to provide them.

Honey blue-eye (*Pseudomugil mellis*) and Oxleyan pygmy perch (*Nannoperca oxleyana*)

It is difficult to imagine the Gold Coast as anything other than an imitation Miami. Not long ago, however, much of it was rich coastal heathland, known evocatively as wallum, through which ran

Leadbeater's possum—the old trees in which it nests are collapsing or being felled faster than they are being replaced. *Mick Tanton*, **Right**, the frog of northern Queensland—including this one, the sharp-snouted torrent frog—are vanishing without apparent cause. *Mike Trengove*, **Far right**, after breeding in captivity, the trout cod is being returned to streams from which it had disappeared. *Gunther Schmid*

peaty streams full of charming little fish. Two of those fish are now threatened with extinction.

On a recent survey by Angela Arthington and Chris Marshall of Griffith University, the honey blue-eye and the Oxleyan pygmy perch were found to be largely confined to tributaries of the Noosa River and to dune lakes on Moreton and Fraser Islands. Here they live their tiny lives in shallow water

among the reeds, the males turning spectacular colours in the breeding season to defend territories, the females sticking their eggs to submerged leaves. The male blue-eye is particularly territorial, keeping nearly all fish, no matter what species, from his little patch.

Territorial colour, however, is also attractive to the owners of aquariums

ecology of sea-bird breeding islands relies on a constant influx of nutrients from the surrounding waters. At the moment the food supply of the sea-birds—and hence the lizards—seems reasonably secure. However, as pressures to fish the surrounding waters increase, care will need to be taken that enough is left for the islands.



and many fish are still caught for the pet shop trade. More threatening are general processes degrading fresh water—the deadly cocktail of pesticides and oils that is urban run-off and the slurry of squandered topsoil from farms. The security of the fish will depend almost entirely on retaining habitat in reserves that also include stream catchments, and are sufficiently remote to discourage trappers.

Pedra Branca skink (*Pseudemoia palfreymani*)

When sea levels rose at the end of the last Ice Age some skinks were marooned on a tiny island, little more than a rock, in the wild oceans south of Tasmania. They would probably have died out soon afterwards had not this rock, safe from the tigers and devils of the mainland, been an ideal breeding site for sea-birds. Gannets and shy albatross provide the lizards with spilled fish and dead chicks throughout the summer breeding season, ample to keep them going through the long, cold winter when, being cold-blooded, these fascinating lizards are torpid anyway.

So the conservation of the lizards is tied to that of the sea-birds and that, in turn, is tied to conservation of the sea-birds' food. It is easy to make an island a conservation reserve and assume that everything will be all right. But the

Sharp-snouted torrent frog (*Taudactylus acutirostris*)

After a protracted battle, reported in detail in *Wild*, tropical rain forests in Australia are now reasonably secure. Alas, the same cannot be said for the animals that live in them. In the last two years nearly all the frogs living in the upland rain-forest streams of north Queensland have either declined in numbers or disappeared altogether. The sharp-snouted torrent frog, which once used to be common in the clear, rushing water, has almost disappeared. Only in a few ranges in the far north of the wet tropics do populations survive, and there seems to be no reason why these should not disappear as well.

It is tragic that the reason for the apparent extinction of Australia's upland rain-forest frogs, along with those from similar habitats around the world, remains a complete mystery. Climatic change, holes in the ozone layer and habitat degradation have all been dismissed—many of the frogs live in undisturbed forests deep beneath a dense protective canopy of leaves. Perhaps there is a mysterious epidemic, as devastating to frogs as AIDS is becoming to humans. Whatever it is, scientists will have to move quickly to save the remaining populations of the sharp-snouted torrent frog.

Trout cod

(*Maccullochella macquariensis*)

In 1927, when members of the Strathbogie Angling Club stocked Seven Creeks near Euroa in Victoria with fish from the Goulburn River, they were unaware of their role in conserving biodiversity. They had moved not Murray cod, as they believed, but a species whose identity was only recognized in the 1970s, known now as the trout cod. In so doing they almost certainly saved it from extinction.

A review of old specimens has shown that trout cod once occurred through most of the Murray-Darling system. By the 1980s, however, the species could be found in only a small stretch of the Murray River, and in Seven Creeks. Fish that live in turgid streams are almost



impossible to study so little is known about the biology of the species. Similarly, the reasons for its decline are unclear. It is possible that regulation of the river flow has affected food availability, and clearing of snags to keep the streams clear for boats may have removed egg-laying sites. But many other reasons are plausible—the Murray-Darling has been far from pristine for a long time.

Paradoxically, this has advantages because the trout cod can serve to assess the success of attempts at stream rehabilitation. Using techniques for captive breeding developed at places like Snobs Creek hatchery in northern Victoria, streams where the species once lived can be restocked. Where the fish survive, it will suggest that stream health has improved.

Pygmy blue-tongue (*Tiliqua adelaidensis*)

Reptiles, which have a greater diversity in Australia than anywhere else in the world, have proven remarkably resilient to the changes wrought since European settlement. For some time, however, it was feared that a small lizard had indeed been lost from that most altered of

Australian landscapes, the northern Mt Lofty Ranges.

And perhaps we might have given up looking had not Graham Andrew, with typical herpetological curiosity, decided to see what a brown snake killed on the road had eaten—and had the wit to recognize the significance of his find. Even then it was some time before a live pygmy blue-tongue was discovered, brown snakes being far more efficient collectors than people. It now seems that small populations have escaped 150 years of ploughing by hiding among rocky outcrops along creeks. Unless consciously tended, tiny isolated popula-

first candidates anywhere in the world. This is cryogenics, or freezing. Recent research has shown that tiny fragments of the growing tip can apparently be stored alive in liquid nitrogen for an indefinite period. When needed they can be resuscitated to form a whole plant bearing leaves, flowers and roots. Such insurance is both a boon and a potential hazard. Whilst effective storage of genetic material in liquid nitrogen could ensure that species are preserved and genetic diversity is never lost, it also weakens arguments for maintaining endangered species in the wild.

Foxtail palm (*Wodyetia bifurcata*)

Scientists first knew that there was a new species of palm at Cape Melville in north Queensland when they found a fruit unknown to them floating down a river. Some time later, in 1982, botanist Tony Irvine led an expedition to the mountains of basalt boulders at the head-waters of the stream and found a small population of a palm quite unlike any other, with bold sprays of red berries and leaves like great, green feather dusters.

Sad to say, scientific excitement was soon succeeded by horticultural greed—

unfortunately, not an isolated event. An unscrupulous nurseryman cut down hundreds of the new palms for their seeds and soon had them ready for market. However, since the entire population was contained within a National Park, the authorities were able to confiscate the lot and present them to municipal authorities for street planting. Only when these trees fruit will it be legal to have the trees in private gardens. After that, the palms at Cape Melville should be free of molestation.

Leadbeater's possum (*Gymnobelidus leadbeateri*)

Few threatened species have been the cause of more controversy than this inhabitant of the mature ash forests of Victoria's Central Highlands. Needing hollows in large and decaying ash trees, the possum is threatened because the old trees which contain hollows are collapsing or being felled for timber more quickly than they are being replaced. The problem is acute because so much of the ash forest was incinerated by the fires of Black Friday 1939, and it will be 150 years at least before regenerating trees develop hollows.



A wandering albatross at its winter feeding grounds off the New South Wales coast near Wollongong. **Mike Carter.** **Right,** a male malle fowl on its nest—an incubator warmed by rotting compost—Wyperfeld National Park, Victoria. **Right, above,** malle fowl in detail. This intriguing bird suffers from predation by foxes, loss of habitat to grazing, and fire. **Joe Benshemesh**

tions like these are apt to disappear one by one from over-predation, fire or other environmental accidents. Rediscovery of the blue-tongue, however, should ensure that this extinction by attrition will not be allowed to happen.

Corribin grevillea (*Grevillea scapigera*)

Until very recently it was feared that this delicate, white-flowered grevillea had been lost. There had been no records from the Western Australian wheat-belt, where it was first collected, for many years, and nearly all the original habitat had been cleared for wheat farming. Then just six plants were found, accidental survivors of the overenthusiastic clearing which has consumed so much of that botanically diverse, but little appreciated, part of Australia. Of course there are lots of other grevilleas—one of their values, both aesthetically and to commercial horticulture, is their diversity—but few are as delicate as the corribin grevillea. Now the species has been found, it may be that the nurturing of those six wild plants can be assisted by the nursery trade.

Another means of ensuring the survival of the species is a technique for which the corribin grevillea is among the

National Threatened Species Network

What you can do

The National Threatened Species Network (NTSN) is a non-government, community-based network which seeks to increase support for protection of threatened species and their habitats throughout Australia. The national co-ordinator is based in the Victorian office of the World Wide Fund for Nature, and there is a co-ordinator in each State and in the Northern Territory hosted by a non-government environmental organization. To become active in the NTSN, get in touch with your State co-ordinator and offer your time and talents. (As you can see from the following list, a great range of skills is sought.)

You can help the NTSN to protect species by:

- joining or starting a 'friends of a species' /'adopt a species' community action group

- finding out how you or your group can act locally to save species
- helping scientists with research and management work for threatened species in your area
- producing displays on threatened species in your local area
- becoming a network community speaker
- distributing educational materials
- researching and writing articles on threatened species for newspapers and magazines
- talking to your local council about protecting species and habitats in your area
- making politicians aware of the need for protection of threatened species
- assisting the NTSN with research and administrative tasks
- helping the NTSN to raise funds

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National Co-ordinator
World Wide Fund
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Conservation Council of
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79 Stirling St
Perth WA 6000
Phone (09) 220 0652
Fax (09) 220 0653

With such long periods to consider—50 times the length of the average Parliament—planning for possum conservation is fraught with difficulty. At the moment timber cutting is thought to be the main threat as it accelerates the loss of trees with hollows, but there is going to be a shortage in the long run whatever happens. The key to saving the species in the wild (it breeds readily in captivity) will be the creation of artificial hollows, something that would also help many other forest-dwelling animals. Nest boxes are too short-lived. The only answer may be to damage healthy trees so that hollows will form more quickly. Everything from injecting trees with fungus to dynamiting their crowns has been suggested but, as yet, there are no answers and the possum's future remains uncertain.

Wandering albatross

(*Diomedea exulans*)

For over 30 years a small group of Wollongong residents has set out in small boats each winter to catch this largest and most majestic of sea-birds on its feeding grounds off the New South Wales coast. The metal bands they attach to the birds' legs have been recovered at remote breeding colonies on islands all round the Southern Ocean, and the Wollongong

ers, who first recorded the mortality caused by fishing, has pooled his talents with an engineer to develop a bait-throwing machine for the long-liners. As a result, the decline in albatross numbers may be reversed—and the boats may catch more fish. Currently being tested in the southern Indian Ocean, it is hoped that the new machine will be adopted by all long-liners within the next decade.

they struggle unaided to the surface, then run alone into the bush. Within days they are capable of flight. Such independence has its costs—most young die within a few weeks, the natural mortality being exacerbated by fox predation, or by starvation as a result of overgrazing or excessively frequent fires. They have been rendered particularly vulnerable by past clearing of their habitat and care



group in turn has found bands from French, British and New Zealand colonies. Recent work by Melbourne scientist David Nicholls, using transmitters located by satellites, has shown that many of the birds fly half-way round the world specifically to spend the non-breeding season feeding on the squid that die and float to the surface off the southern New South Wales coast.

But all workers have noted a decline in albatross numbers over the last 20 years. The last Australian breeding colony, on Macquarie Island, has dwindled to a mere seven pairs. The cause of the decline is long-line fishing, the big birds taking hooked bait and drowning. But all is not lost. Tasmanian researcher Nigel Broth-

Mallee fowl (*Leipoa ocellata*)

The mallee fowl is one of the few birds in the world to use a compost heap to warm its eggs. The male bird, the size of a large chook, uses his powerful legs to scratch together enough sand and leaves to form a capped mound a metre high. Into this, his mate lays up to 20 eggs. The male then keeps them at the right temperature by covering them with rotting leaves or opening the nest to the sun. To help him to decide what to do to the nest, he tests the mound's temperature with his tongue.

But he obtains no tangible satisfaction for his devotion because young mallee fowl are among the most precocious of birds. After hatching beneath the sand

must be taken to ensure that the remaining fragmented populations remain viable.

Bilby (*Macrotis lagotis*)

Bilbies, like all the mammals of Australia's arid zone, are adapted to extreme fluctuations in climate. Thus, in good times, they can breed rapidly and spread across the countryside, resembling rabbits in their fecundity as well as their floppy ears. Then, for the long periods of drought, they survive only in the pockets of better country along watercourses. Alas for the bilby, this is where sheep, cattle and rabbits have congregated since they spread inland last century. These exotic herbivores were soon followed by the introduced predators, the cats and foxes. Before long few refuges remained for this once abundant burrowing bandicoot.

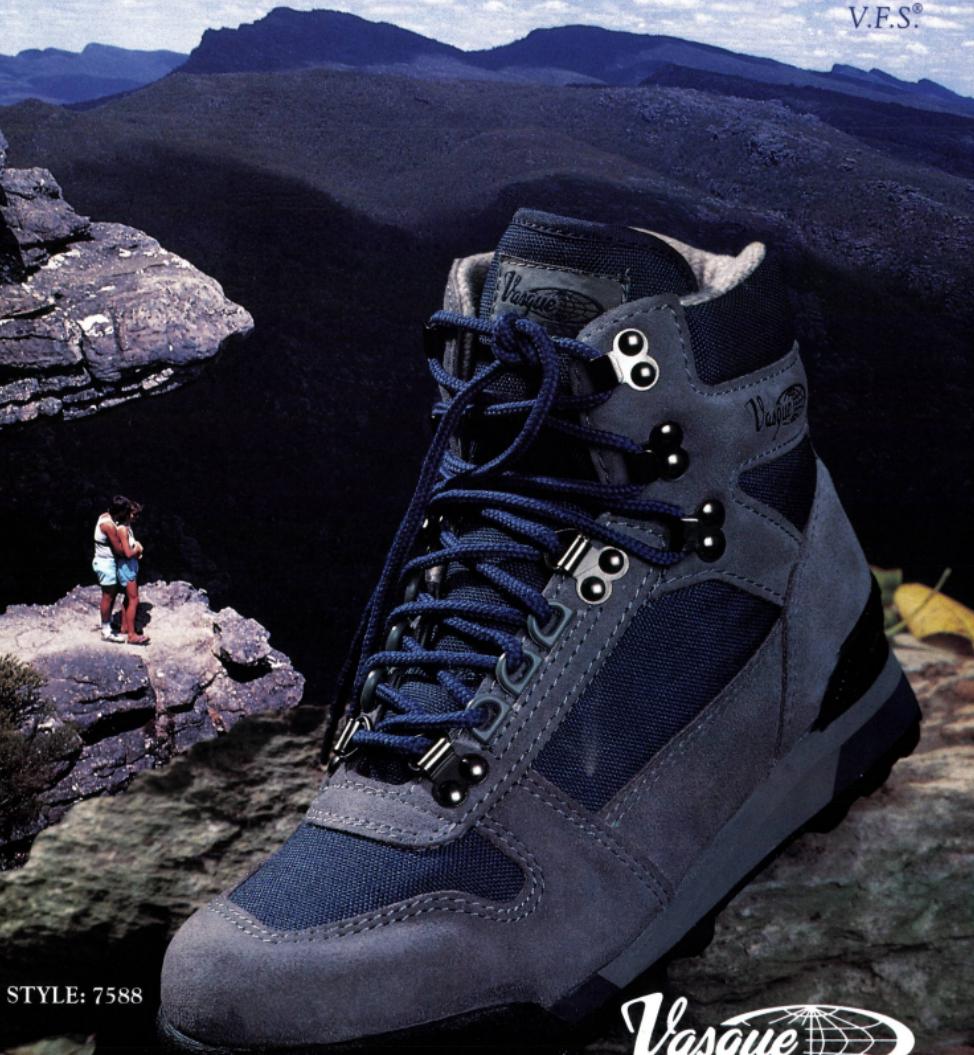
Last year the army was called in to defend one of the last known colonies in western Queensland against an abundance of cats. Research has now begun to ensure that this colony survives. One desperate measure to save the species could be domestication—they are said to make the most lovable of pets, affectionate and easy to keep. Though it is illegal at present to keep bilbies without leaping through a veritable obstacle course of bureaucratic hoops, surely a bilby burrowing under the bedclothes would be better than a perfectly legal cat dripping blood and feathers down the hallway. ■

Stephen Garnett is a biologist who is employed at present by the Queensland National Parks and Wildlife Service. He is *WILD's* Contributing Editor on natural history.

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M T BOGONG

Anthony Degen takes a classic trip to Victoria's highest peak

Victoria's highest mountain, Mt Bogong, is situated at the northern end of the Bogong High Plains. The height of the Big One, as translated from Aboriginal language, is 1986 metres above sea level. The walk described will go up the Staircase Spur, over the summit to camp at Cleve Cole Hut, and return down the Eskdale Spur.

No matter how experienced a bushwalker you are, Mt Bogong has to be treated with respect. Bad weather can blow up with awesome suddenness and the ridges above the tree-line are exposed to high winds from all directions.

Despite this, Mt Bogong is not as bad as it seems. Many people have made the 1300 metre ascent to the summit with relative ease.

When to go

The best time to visit Mt Bogong is summer, when the snow has melted and the weather is kinder.

Do not visit Mt Bogong in winter unless you are proficient in snow camping and experienced in skiing.

Equipment

Always be prepared for unexpected weather. Snow can fall in summer and storms start up frequently. Mt Bogong's summit is exposed and very windy. Wear warm clothing. Use a stove for cooking. Eat high-energy food as the climb is demanding. You will not need gaiters for the creek crossings now that they are all equipped with foot-bridges. Bring a whistle, though, as fog can descend in minutes. Make sure that your tent is in good condition and your sleeping-bag is a warm one.

Maps

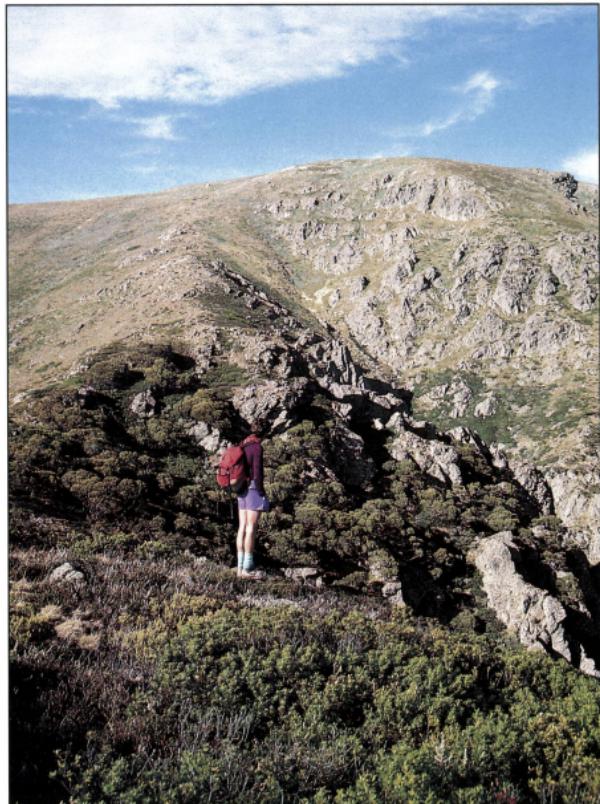
The two maps which are most appropriate are the Vicmap Bogong Alpine Area 1:50 000 and Algoa Mt Bogong 1:25 000 sheets. Either will do.

Access

To get to Mountain Creek, leave the Hume Freeway at the 'Snowfields' turn-off north of Glenrowan. Follow this road through Oxley, Milawa and Myrtleford, and turn left on to the signposted road to Mt Beauty and Falls Creek. When you cannot go any further, turn right. Follow the Kiewa Valley Highway into Tawonga and turn left on to the Mountain Creek road opposite the Bogong View Hotel. You will soon come to a camping ground. Camp here if it is late, or follow the road for about 11 kilometres to a grassy picnic area at a Y-junction. You are now approximately 350 kilometres from Melbourne.

The walk

The route described goes up the Staircase Spur to the summit, then to Cleve Cole Hut, and returns down Eskdale Spur. The Staircase Spur has rewarding views and a fairly good foot track. The Staircase rises in a series of steep sections. The summit is broad and gently contoured when compared with the summit ridge of Mt Feathertop.



Looking up the final climb to the summit of Mt Bogong from Gorge Gap on the Staircase Spur. Glenn van der Knijff

In the morning, set out on foot from the Y-junction along the right-hand track. After several creek crossings, all on foot-bridges, you will come to the signposted start of the Staircase Spur.

There are no special markers but the track is reasonably well defined as it leads up to Bivouac Hut. This hut marks the half-way point to the summit. Clean water can be found to the west in a small spring or, more reliably,

in a tank beside the hut. Continue onwards and the track becomes stony and narrow. It is badly eroded in places and is easy to follow. Above the tree-line a few snow poles appear and you will pass a cairn to three skiers who lost their lives on Mt Bogong in 1943. More snow poles lead up to the summit plateau, and from there it is a short climb to the highest point in Victoria.

Follow the pole line back for 500 metres—ignoring the Staircase Spur track at pole number 1278—to the top of Eskdale Spur at pole number 1272. Turn right and follow the poles until number 1191, the Cleve Cole



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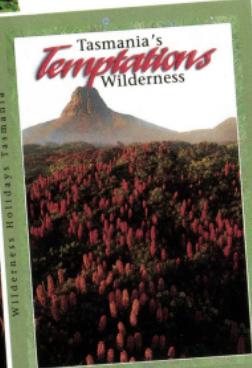
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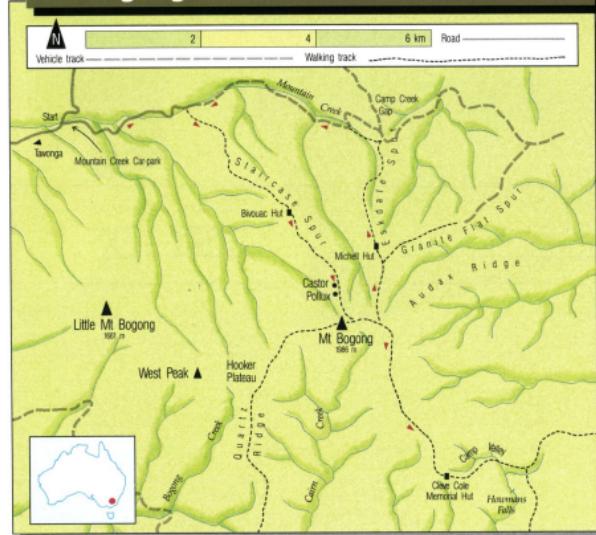
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Mt Bogong area



Walkers who visit Mt Bogong for the first time may feel dwarfed by the huge, exposed summit ridge, seen here from Eskdale Spur. *Chris Baxter*

Memorial Hut. This hut is maintained by the Mt Bogong Club; part of it is locked, but a large section is kept open for visitors. This is where you will stay the night, either in the hut or camped nearby. Don't rely on the hut for shelter as it is quite popular and often crowded.

In the morning head back to the summit for a last glimpse of the view if you wish to.

From the summit point, follow the pole line back to the top of Eskdale Spur. Unnumbered poles lead north, down the steep spur. The poles end, and a foot track enters the trees and leads within a short distance to Michel Hut. It is in good condition and has tank water—though it is worth opening the inspection port of the tank to check for dead animals and other nasties.

From Michel Hut the track continues down to meet an old fire track coming from the right at Camp Creek Gap, four kilometres from the summit. A bit further on, turn left at an intersection. Follow this track past the foot of the Staircase Spur back to the car-park on Mountain Creek.

The rewards and views will be yours if you make the effort to climb Victoria's highest peak. ■

Anthony Degen is a bushwalker and cross-country skier and a member of the East Gippsland Coalition. At the time of writing these track notes, he was a student at Melbourne's Whitefriars College.

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This survey will help you to choose from the amazing range of garments available when you come to buy a new raincoat. The accompanying table lists the main features of every garment surveyed. The text below explains each of the table's columns in turn and offers advice on how to choose the right raincoat for your needs.

The most popular fabric in the garments surveyed is Gore-Tex. Once considered the new wave of technology, Gore-Tex has quickly become the standard with which other waterproof fabrics are compared. Gore-Tex is a microporous PTFE (polytetrafluoroethylene) membrane which, put simply, allows water vapour to pass through it but does not allow water drops to enter. This means that you are kept dry, not only from the rain outside, but also to a significant extent from perspiration within.

Most raincoats on the market are made of three-layer Gore-Tex. This is manufactured by laminating the PTFE film between a face fabric (on the outside of the garment) and a backing fabric (inside). For some years the most popular variety for rainwear has been three-layer Taslan Gore-Tex. Taslan is very resistant to abrasion and so stands up well to the wear and tear of outdoor activities. All the three-layer jackets surveyed are made of Taslan fabrics except those made by Paddy Pallin. These use a three-layer fabric called Scope Gore-Tex, imported from Japan, which is a little lighter and softer than Taslan but is equal in performance.

In two-layer Gore-Tex, the film is laminated to a face fabric only. Most garments made of two-layer Gore-Tex are lined to protect the PTFE film. Most rainwear in the United States and Europe is made of two-layer Gore-Tex as it is much lighter, softer and breathes up to 40 per cent better than three-layer fabrics. Its disadvantage is that it is not nearly as tough and will not stand up to the rigours of extended pack-carrying or scrub-bashing. Garments which combine three-layer Gore-Tex for wear and two-layer for feel and the ability to breathe are destined to become increasingly popular.

Entrant, Milair, MVT, Permeatech and Reflex all consist of a polyurethane coating on a face fabric and are today's new wave of waterproof/breathable fabrics. The coating is a mixture (usually in molecular layers) of hydrophobic (water-hating) and hydrophilic (water-loving) molecular chains. The hydrophobic chains keep water out while the hydrophilic chains draw water vapour to the outside as it comes into contact with the coating on the inside of the garment.

The lighter the face fabric, the more breathable the garment will be but, in general terms, the less resistant to abrasion. Three-layer Entrant and three-layer Reflex are the only two of the coated waterproof/breath-



Human sacrifice in the Blue Mountains? Don Cameron manages a smile in spite of it all on a wet day in the Grose Valley. (Is that what they mean by 'under-arm ventilation'?) Andrew Cox

ables surveyed to have an additional backing layer, but garments made of two-layer fabrics can be lined to protect the breathable coating—the Wilderness Accent Anorak is an example. These could be expected to resist abrasion better than unlined two-layer fabrics and are said to breathe equally well. The two-layer coated breathables are about half the price of Gore-Tex, and are hard to overlook if you are on a budget but still expect a raincoat to perform well. Provided you choose a garment of an appropriate weight for your garment of use, it should last you a long time. Most recreational users will be well satisfied

with these fabrics. Those who give their rainwear regular or particularly hard use will probably find that three-layer fabrics last longer.

Japara has suffered a decline in popularity since the advent of the breathable fabrics discussed above, but raincoats made from this polyester-cotton fabric are still good value for money. In the past, japara relied heavily on swelling of the cotton fibres to prevent water penetrating the spaces between the threads. Now, in addition, japara garments increasingly rely on a layer of proofing to keep water out. Dry japara is coated with either polyurethane or, in a few cases, a wax mixture, usually on the inside. Oiled japara jackets, impregnated with linseed oil or wax, are less common these days but are definitely still around—you can smell them coming!



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In stark contrast to the situation with other waterproof fabrics there is nothing in the way of normal cleaning, washing or dry-cleaning that you

can do which will harm your Gore-Tex garment - in fact, a good wash after any regular use will serve only to extend its life.

More often than not, everything that doesn't affect Gore-Tex fabric will degrade competitive fabrics - to the point where they leak. Take one example: in temperatures below zero the coatings on coated fabrics become stiff and brittle and will crack and chip away from the flex and wear points on a garment.

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Advice and Service: Consult trained shop staff and our User's Guide when choosing a garment for your outdoor needs. For service phone W.L. Gore and Associates free on 008 226 703.



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Coated fabrics of this kind do not breathe as well as the newer fabrics discussed above. Most japa jackets, however, are designed with mesh panels to allow for some ventilation. None of their seams will be factory sealed but this is quickly remedied with a tube of an appropriate sealant. The designs of these jackets have been in use for many years and are still effective. Their relatively low price ensures their continued appeal.

WL Gore, the manufacturer of Gore-Tex, has undertaken a marketing campaign called 'Guaranteed To Keep You Dry', or 'GTKYD', with some success. As a result, most manufacturers of Gore-Tex garments are licensed by WL Gore; they must submit their garments to Gore for testing in order to carry the guarantee. This accounts to some extent for the remarkable similarity in many of the features of Gore-Tex jackets. The programme is based around testing of garments for a more or less specific end use. Each GTKYD garment has a label sewn to it bearing an icon which designates the appropriate end use for that garment. The three relevant icons for outdoor use are those for backpacking (a person under a tent), cycling and skiing. All the Gore-Tex garments surveyed carry the GTKYD guarantee. You can ask a retailer for more information about GTKYD, but keep in mind that it is only a marketing programme by WL

Gore and does not relate to fabrics other than Gore-Tex.

No single jacket is the perfect length for all purposes. Bushwalkers tend to prefer quite a long jacket: many like to walk without overpants so they will choose a jacket long enough to keep shorts dry—just above knee length. These jackets are described in the table as 'long'. If you plan to do a lot of Telemarking or mountaineering, you'll require a garment that won't get in the way or hinder your movement. Those which extend no further than the waist are termed 'short' in the table. In between is a vast array of lengths. 'Medium' refers to jackets at about mid-thigh length. Talk to other people who use their rainwear regularly and find out what they like. If you don't mind wearing overpants, a shorter jacket will be suitable for all activities. The most popular jackets are of medium length—they look good around town and work well in all situations.

Except for the few described as pullovers, all the garments surveyed have a full-length front zipper. They use good-quality zippers which start easily and run well. Both moulded-tooth zippers and continuous-coil ones work well and are more than sufficiently strong. Many people seem to prefer the look of strength which large, chunky, moulded zippers have; others prefer the smaller, coil

variety. Whichever you choose, thread it correctly at the start and keep it clean and you'll have no problems.

A **double-ended zipper** lets you undo your jacket from the bottom as well as the top, which is a big advantage in longer jackets should you want to sit down or—heaven forbid!—walk uphill.

This zipper is waterproofed by the **front closure** system, sometimes quite an elaborate arrangement of two or even three overlapping flaps. To pass the GTKYD test, a front closure must guarantee that no water gets in through the zipper; those on other garments may need to be looked at a little more closely. Make sure that the flaps cover the zipper properly and do not share seams through which water might pass. Look out for seams which run across the chest and under the front closure flaps and finish at the zipper. Water will travel along these seams and you'll get wet.

I hate Velcro closures because the stuff gets caught in my beard, but that is a personal problem. Properly matched Velcro gives a tight seal. Press-studs and zippers won't snag your beard but can be a bit of a hassle with cold or gloved hands.

A flap of fabric behind the zipper where it comes up over your chin and face is just about essential in really cold, horrible weather. It prevents the cold zipper rubbing against your

Wild Gear Survey Waterproof parkas

Fabric	Length	Suggested use	Zipper	Double-zipper	Front closure	Face protection	Hood	Hood stiffening	Hood adjustment	Pocket (type), closure	Hand-warmer pockets	Waist drawcord	Weight, grams	Aprox. price, \$	
Bush Boss Australia Storm Angler Storm Wader	Medium Medium	General General	Moulded Moulded	Yes No	Studs Studs	No No	Stays out Stays out	Wire Wire	Yes Yes	2, flap 2, flap	None None	Yes No	Inside In hem	664 578	
Fairytown New Zealand Advantage Anorak Equaliser Jacket Blizzard Anorak	Short Lined Lite-Tech As above 2-layer Hi-Resist	Skiing Skiing General Medium pullover	Moulded Moulded Moulded Moulded	No Yes Yes Yes	Studs Studs Studs Studs	No No No No	Folds away Folds away Folds away Folds away	None None Plastic	No No No No	2, zip 1, zip* 1, zip 1, flap and zip	No No No No	In hem Outside Outside Outside	576† 230 620† 782†		
Hallmark New Zealand Entrant Parka	Medium	3-layer Hi-Resist Entrant	General	Moulded	Yes	Velcro	No	Stays out	None	No	2, flap	1 inside	No	Outside	648†
Intertrek Australia Lukka MVT	Medium Medium	Medium Bushwalking, general	Moulded Moulded	Yes Yes	Studs Studs	Yes Yes	Stays out Folds away	Wire Wire	No No	2, flap 2 bellows, flap	1 hidden 1 hidden	Yes Yes	Outside Inside	560 486	
JAH Australia Mirage Expresso Bulding	Medium Lined 3-layer 2-layer Gore-Tex 3-layer	Women's general Skiing, travel Bushwalking, travel	Moulded Moulded Moulded	Yes Yes Yes	Studs Studs Studs	Yes Yes Yes	Stays out Stays out Stays out	Wire Wire Wire	Yes No No	2, flap 1 hidden 2 bellows	1 hidden 1 hidden 1 hidden	No No Yes	Outside In hem Outside	670 600 760	
Kathmandu New Zealand Rosella Ramparts Technical Jacket	2-layer Gore-Tex Short Med-long Short	Skiing, travel Skiing, travel Bushwalking, general Mountainseeing, skiing	Coil Coil Moulded Moulded	No Yes Yes Yes	Studs Studs Studs Studs	No Yes Yes Yes	Folds away Folds away Folds away	None Wire Wire	No Yes Yes	2, flap and zip 1 hidden 2 bellows, flap	None 1 zip 1 hidden	No Yes Yes	In hem Outside Outside	576 726 732	
Mont Australia Hiker Tempest Travel Jacket	Medium Med-long Short	Bushwalking, general Bushwalking, general Skiing, travel	Moulded Moulded Moulded	Yes Yes Yes	Velcro Studs Studs	Yes Yes Yes	Stays out Stays out Folds away	Wire Wire Wire	Yes Yes Yes	2, flap 2, flap 2, flap and zip	None 1, flap and zip 1, flap and zip	No Yes No	Outside Outside Outside	650 840 808	

*folds into pocket to make bum bag

† weight of size large

‡ weight includes stuff sack provided

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chin or getting caught in your beard! This is what the **face protection** column refers to.

All the **hoods** surveyed can be tightened with a draw-cord. No attempt has been made to judge what style of hood fits or works best because this is a very personal thing. The table tells you whether the hood is detachable, tucks away into a collar, or just stays out all the time. If you're wearing your rain jacket, chances are that you'll almost certainly need the hood. Garments without a hood were not considered for this survey.

Most, but not all, hoods have a **stiffened visor** to help to keep the rain off your face. Where the stiffening is described as plastic, it is not malleable and will always return to approximately its original shape. Visors stiffened with wire can be shaped for protection from driving rain and to maximize peripheral vision. The wire used is of good quality in all cases and can be continually bent and shaped without breaking.

A Velcro tab on the back of the hood allows you to **adjust** how far forward the hood sits on your head. It is impossible to design a hood that will fit everyone perfectly. If a hood is the ideal shape and design for you, an adjustment tab is superfluous. Most people, however, find them very useful.

When trying on a jacket, take the time to ensure that the hood fits properly. Adjust the draw-cord and, if possible, the stiffening in the visor and the adjustment tab. Make sure that the hood is not too big or too tight. Turn your head to the sides. The hood should move with you so that you retain full vision. If you end up with a facefull of hood, it is either poorly adjusted or too large. If you plan to wear your jacket while climbing or cycling, make sure that you can fit a helmet under the hood.

The **pockets** at waist level and chest level are numbered and briefly described. In many cases a fabric flap protects the opening; it is usually held down by a small Velcro tab.

Pockets which expand with a gusset are described as bellows pockets. Hidden chest pockets are often referred to as map pockets. **Hand-warmer pockets** allow easy access for your hands without any closure.

Many jackets these days have pockets in the chest which you can get to while wearing a pack with a hip harness, or a climbing harness. This is a good idea, but may result in two or even three layers of fabric between you and the outside. This will significantly impair the ability of breathable materials to breathe—and in one of the most crucial parts of the garment. I'd rather sacrifice the ability to get at my pockets than my jacket's ability to breathe! Keeping this in mind, check that the pockets are at a convenient height for you and will take all the junk you want to put in them.

Almost every jacket surveyed has a **draw-cord** at the waist. This stops the jacket riding up somewhat and helps to trap warm air around your upper body, but I suspect that

Wild Gear Survey Waterproof parkas continued

	Fabric	Length	Suggested use	Zipper	Double-ended zipper	Front closure	Face protection	Hood	Hood stiffening	Hood adjustment	Pocket (type), closure	Waist	Hand-warmer pockets	Waist draw-cord	Weight, grams	Approx. price, \$	
Mountain Designs Australia																	
Comulus	3-layer Gore-Tex	Short-med	General	Moulded	Yes	Velcro	Yes	Zips off	None	No	2, zip	None	No	Outside	614	239	
Crux	3-layer Gore-Tex	Med-long	General	Moulded	Yes	Velcro	Yes	Stays out	Plastic	Yes	2, flap	1 hidden	No	Outside	673	259	
Stratus	3-layer Gore-Tex	Long	Bushwalking, general	Moulded	Yes	Velcro	Yes	Stays out	Plastic	Yes	2, flap	1 hidden	Yes	Outside	732	299	
One Planet Australia																	
Last Tango	Mizar	Medium	General, travel	Moulded	Yes	Velcro	Yes	Stays out	Wire	No	2, flap	None	No	No	550	150	
Pea Soup	Mizar	Medium	General, travel	Moulded	Yes	Velcro	Yes	Stays out	Wire	No	2, flap	None	No	Outside	570	160	
Traveller	Mizar	Short	Travel	Moulded	Yes	Studs	Yes	Folds away	None	No	2, flap and stud	2, flap and stud	No	Outside	572	230	
Paddy Pallin Australia																	
Verve	3-layer Gore-Tex	Medium	Women's general	Moulded	Yes	2 zipped flaps	Yes	Stays out	Plastic	No	None	2, flap and zip	Yes	Outside	580	319	
Vista	3-layer Gore-Tex	Long	Bushwalking, general	Moulded	Yes	As above	Yes	Stays out	Plastic	No	None	2, flap and zip	Yes	Half, outside	680	349	
Vortex	3-layer Gore-Tex	Medium	General	Moulded	Yes	As above	Yes	Folds away	Plastic	No	None	2, flap and zip	1 inside, zip	No	Outside	680	389
Peter Storm UK																	
129 Jacket	MVT 6.2	Med-long	General	Moulded	Yes	Velcro	No	Stays out	None	No	2, flap and zip	None	No	No	552	165	
915 Jacket	MVT microfibre	Medium	General, travel	Moulded	Yes	Studs	Yes	Folds away	None	No	2, flap and stud	None	No	Outside	604	380	
Superior Australia																	
Cross Country	Dry japa	Medium	General	Moulded	Yes	Velcro	No	Stays out	None	No	2, flap	1, flap	No	Inside	578	95	
Mountaineer	Oiled japa	Medium	Bushwalking, general	Moulded	No	Velcro	No	Stays out	None	No	2, flap	None	No	Inside	848	110	
Backpacker	Permeastech	Medium	General	Coil	Yes	Velcro	Yes	Stays out	None	No	2, flap	1, zip	No	Outside	460	150	
Tanami Australia																	
Baron	3-layer Gore-Tex	Medium	General	Coil	No	Studs	No	Stays out	Plastic	No	2 bellows, flap	None	No	Outside	558	249	
Tangata Australia																	
Standard Jacket	Dry japa	Med-long	General	Moulded	No	Studs	Yes	Stays out	None	No	2, flap	None	No	Inside	580	85	
Deluxe Jacket	Dry japa	Med-long	General	Coil	Yes	Studs	No	Stays out	Wire	No	2, flap	None	No	Inside	560	100	
Wilderness New Zealand																	
Accent Jacket	2-layer Reflex	Medium	General	Moulded	No	Studs	No	Folds away	None	No	2, flap	1, zip*	No	In hem	386	179	
Accent Anorak	Lined 2-layer Reflex	Medium, pullover	General	Moulded	No	Studs	Yes	Stays out	None	No	1, zip*	No	1 outside	432	235		
Rain Parka	3-layer Reflex	Med-long	General	Moulded	Yes	Velcro	Yes	Stays out	Plastic	No	2, flap	1, zip	No	Outside	668	279	
Wilderness Equipment Australia																	
Isoclime 05	3-layer 2-layer Gore-Tex	Short	Mountaineering, skiing	Coil	Yes	Studs	Yes	Folds away	Wire	Yes	None	1, zip	No	In hem	680*	290	
Isoclime 45	3-layer Gore-Tex	Long	Bushwalking, general	Coil	Yes	Studs	Yes	Folds away	Wire	Yes	2 bellows, flap	1 hidden	Yes	In hand-warmer	860*	320	
Isoclime 30	3-layer Gore-Tex	Long	Bushwalking, general	Coil	Yes	Studs	Yes	Stays out	Wire	Yes	2 bellows, flap	1 hidden	Yes	In hand-warmer	820*	330	

*folds into pocket to make bivi bag

† weight of size large

‡ weight includes stuff sack provided

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WILD GEAR SURVEY

the popularity of draw-cords has more to do with ensuring that jackets look stylish when you put them on in the shop. After all, when you put on a pack a draw-cord becomes just about superfluous. Draw-cords which end on the outside of the garment will flap about in the wind but are very easy to adjust. Those on the inside are annoying because you have to open the jacket to adjust them.

The weights listed are for size medium except where otherwise noted and include manufacturers' labels and hang-tags, so allow a few grams for removing these.

Now that you've compared the features and read the words of wisdom, which raincoat do you buy? I guess that this is where these words of wisdom end. No single item of wet-weather gear will suit everyone. Talk to your friends and to shop staff. Ask for their advice, and ask them to justify it. Remember that a raincoat is an essential piece of equipment. If you should be caught outside in very bad weather, it might save your life—mine has saved my life twice. The shorter the jacket or pullover you choose, the more likely you are to need overpants. The very short pullovers used for extreme skiing and mountaineering make salopettes almost mandatory. If you're buying a raincoat for a trip round Europe, your needs will be different. So think about what you are likely to be doing, not only next weekend but in three or four years' time.

The choice of fabrics continually increases. At the time of going to press, MONT had just released a new polyurethane-coated waterproof/breathable fabric called Hydronate with predictions of superior performance. In very general terms, Gore-Tex performs better the colder the air temperature whereas coated waterproof/breathables tend to breathe at a constant rate irrespective of temperature. The coated breathables—even at their best—do not breathe as well as Gore-Tex at its best. But in warm, humid conditions they are as effective as their more expensive counterpart in its three-layered form—this is borne out by laboratory tests. Remember, no matter what the manufacturers claim about their fabrics, none of them will work like air-conditioning. Breathable fabrics will not prevent you from sweating; they will merely remove as much of the moisture as conditions allow. This can be maximized by designs which incorporate good ventilation, and by frequent washing and maintenance of the water-repellency of the outer fabric. Breathable fabrics work—but don't expect miracles.

Make sure that the garment you select fits properly. Sleeves should be of ample length, and you should be able to move your arms freely without causing the jacket to ride up. Don't forget to try on the hood. If you will be venturing into colder climates, try your new raincoat on over a fleece jacket or duvet. Remember, it is much more important for your wet-weather gear to fit properly and work well than to look good. Fortunately, there are so many options these days that you will be able to find a garment which does the lot. ■

Andrea Bell has bushwalked extensively in New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania. He has hiked in the rain, is a keen cross country skier, climber and canyoneer, and even admits to some caving. He has been active in outdoor education and was manager of Wildsports in Sydney for three years. At present he is writing a PhD thesis on the history of nature conservation in eastern Australia.

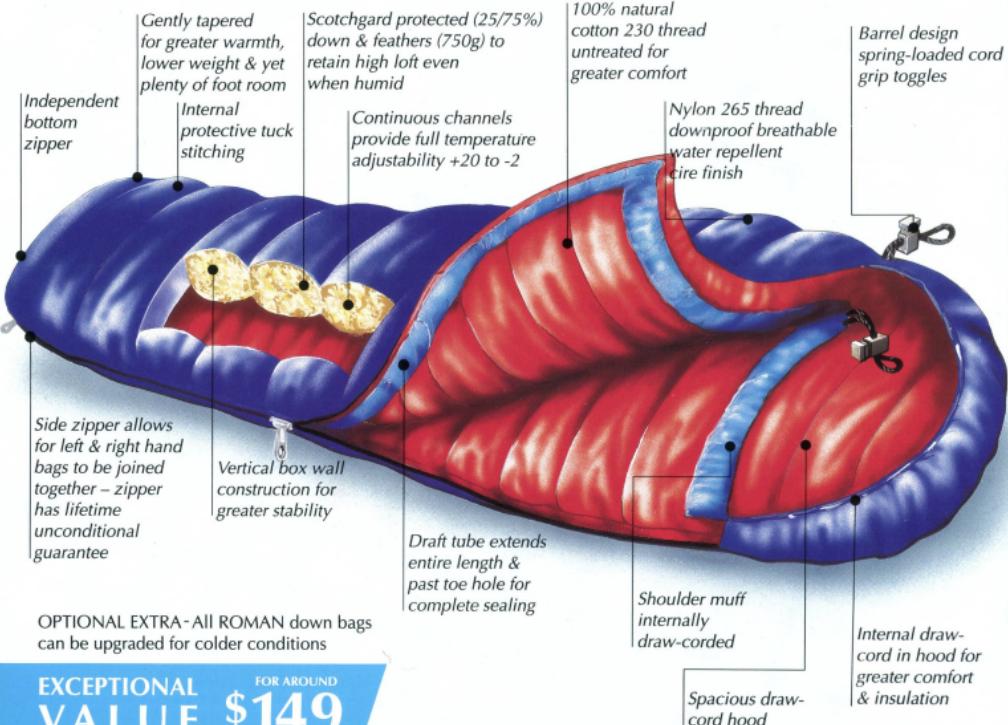
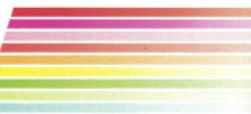
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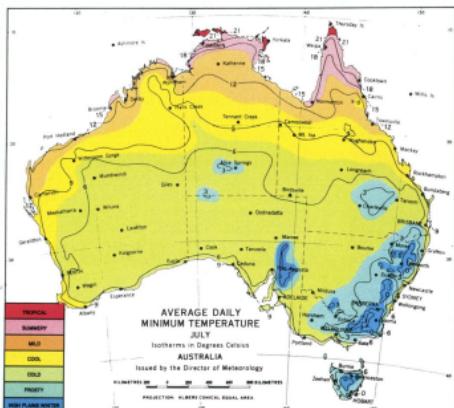


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SLEEPING BAGS



SYNTHETIC SLEEPING-BAGS

Plastic bags—a Wild survey

Not just fake feathers

Synthetics have taken the place of traditional materials in much outdoor equipment and clothing. Cotton tents and wool clothing—other than socks—are rarely seen, and many rucksacks are made of Cordura and other synthetic fabrics. Sleeping-bags are the exception: most serious outdoors people still use bags filled with superdown.

It's not that synthetic sleeping-bags are inferior; rather, they have different properties from down bags. Indeed, they perform better in some ways and are the logical choice for certain uses. Their big advantage is their ability to keep you warm even when wet. A totally saturated synthetic bag will not insulate particularly well, but the bulk of the water is easily removed—by wringing or,

even more easily, by stuffing the bag into its sack and pouring off the excess water—and the damp bag which results will be nearly as good as when it is dry. Down, by contrast, is almost worthless when saturated—I can confirm this after spending three nights in a sopping-wet down bag.

Most of us don't plan to get that wet and I'm glad to say it's a rare occurrence. Paddlers and canyoneers, though, can expect gear to get wet sometimes and should consider synthetic fillings for that important property. Others who use synthetics are those who are allergic to down—they really have no choice—and those who are after the cheapest bag that will do the job.

For the majority of people, however, the most important criterion is the warmth-to-

Wild Equipment Survey Synthetic sleeping-bags

	Fill type	Total weight, kilograms	Construction	Loft at waist, centimetres	Shape	Comments	Approx price, \$
Aurora Australia							
Sandman with hood	Hollofil 4	2.00	Double	14	R	Cotton inner shell	110
Mia	Quallofil 7	2.00	Double	16	TR		230
Carinthia Austria							
Husky 650	GLT	0.90	Loose	11	M	Box foot	210
Husky 1300	GLT	1.70	Double	15	M	Box foot, neck collar	300
Husky 1800	GLT	1.80	Mixed	18	M	Box foot, neck collar	400
Eureka, China							
Bushranger	Lite Loft	1.70	Loose	8	R	Neck collar	195
Jackson	Lite Loft	1.70	Mixed	8	M	Neck collar	229
Southern Cross	Lite Loft	1.60	Loose	12	M	Neck collar	249
Palindown New Zealand							
Horizon	Hollofil 4	1.90	Double	15	TR		130
Bushwalker	Hollofil 4	2.05	Double	14	TR	Cotton inner shell	135
Trapper	Hollofil 4	2.10	Double	16	M	Box foot	200
Kathmandu New Zealand							
Bushwalker	Quallofil 7	1.75	Double	13	TR		110
Globetrotter	Quallofil 7	1.45	Double	15	TR		140
Mountain Designs Australia							
Geyon	Hollofil 4	1.80	Double	11	TR		100
Ossa	Quallofil 7	1.60	Double	13	TR		170
Superbus	Quallofil 7	2.20	Double	16	M	Box foot	270
Paddy Pallin Australia							
Frostline	Hollofil 4	1.90	Double	11	TR		100
Panadown Australia							
Superior	Quallofil 7	1.90	Double	14	R		140
Classic 2	Lite Loft	1.30	Double	15	TR		200
Classic 3	Lite Loft	1.75	Double	17	TR		230
Roman Australia							
Hiker Deluxe Hood	Hollofil 4	2.10	Mixed	12	R	Cotton inner shell	90
Super Supreme Hood	Hollofil 4	2.60	Double	14	R	Cotton inner shell	115
Quallofil 1200 Hood	Quallofil 7	2.20	Double	16	R	Cotton inner shell	125



The old disappearing hut trick, eh? Pretty Valley, Victoria. Darned if I know what it's got to do with synthetic sleeping-bags, either. Andrew Brookes

weight ratio—or, more to the point, the ratio of warmth to compressed size. Whilst synthetic fillings are better than they used to be in this regard, they are still no match for superdown. With a compression-sack it's possible to shrink a synthetic bag to almost the size of a down bag—which looks impressive until you put a down bag into a compression-sack! It's a trick of the stuff-sack, not the filling in the bag.

Synthetic fillings have improved over the years. The cheaper polyester and acrylic fillings should not really be considered for serious outdoor use and are not included in this survey. The first synthetic to gain widespread acceptance was Du Pont's Dacron Fiberfill, which is basically a mat of polyester fibres glued together so that air is trapped between them. Then came Hollofil, with a hollow core to each fibre to reduce weight and trap more warm air. Now there's Hollofil 4, with four holes in each fibre, and the latest Quallofil 7.

Du Pont is not the only developer of synthetic materials. Thinsulate Lite Loft,

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B. Muir on Mt Elbrus. Photo J. Muir

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Fairydown



made by the 3M company, has received favourable reports from a significant number of users. GLT, made in Austria, contains hollow-cored fibres crimped into spirals.

Without a valid means of comparison, it's difficult to decide on the relative merits of bags with different fillings. The only real test is to use them. If you can hire or borrow one before buying, I'd strongly recommend that you do so.

The improvements which have taken place have been small gains rather than major advances. The addition of hollow cores, twists and spirals, and of coatings to prevent fibres clumping together, have built on previous ideas. It is interesting to note that Fiberfill, Hollowfil and Quallofil are all now in use; if the newer fibres were an order of magnitude better than the originals, one would expect that the older versions would no longer be in production.

Of more significance to users than developments in synthetic fillings is the fact that sleeping-bag designers have recently begun to use those fillings much more efficiently than before. This has resulted in bags of greater warmth for the same weight. It is now possible to buy tight, mummy-shaped synthetic bags for winter use as well as the more common rectangular and tapered designs for general use. Neck collars and properly constructed box-foot compartments are available on better models.

One consideration which manufacturers seldom mention is that synthetic fillings flatten and lose their loft with time. Superdown wears out, too, but a synthetic bag cannot easily have its filling boosted to make it warmer again in the same way as a down bag. When a synthetic bag loses its loft, it must be replaced.

A small range of the better synthetic sleeping-bags was selected for this survey. Some manufacturers are represented here by only one model but make as many as 40, so it should be clear that it is possible to find a bag for almost any use within reason. The bags surveyed all contain good-quality fillings and most are of superior construction.

The first column in the table lists the type and amount of filling in each bag. Then comes the total weight. In the bags of simplest construction, all the filling is 'sewn through' to just one of the shells, either inner or outer. This method leaves little insulation along the lines of stitching. A better construction method attaches one sheet of insulating material to each of the two shells with a staggered sewing pattern. This simple method ('double' in the table) is quite effective in reducing cold spots, and is the most popular of all.

Without stitching, much less heat would be lost. Consequently, in some bags the sheets of filling are sewn in as few places as possible. In some cases they are simply sewn around the edges and left floating inside the bag ('loose' in the table). Another option is to introduce walls or panels, much as in box-walled, down-filled bags, and avoid sewing the filling; this is the method used in constructing some of the box-foot compartments.

Temperature ratings of any sort are always controversial. I have avoided them and instead measured the loft of every bag at the

waist. Combined with the shape of the bag, this figure will give you a reasonable idea of its relative warmth—though it is only really useful in comparing bags which contain the same insulating material since some materials are said to be more thermally efficient than others. Regarding shape, the considerations that were described in the survey of down sleeping-bags in *Wild* no 47 apply to synthetic bags as well. It's basically a trade-off between warmth and room to move.

The retail prices listed were correct at the time of writing but as they depend on the cost of imported materials, they do go up and down. Whilst synthetic fillings don't yet equal superdown in every respect, I anticipate that they will begin to give down a real run for its money in the next couple of years.

John Chapman

RUCKSACKS

Aiming high

Summit internal-framed rucksacks are made in Melbourne and would beg comparison with other Australian-made packs for that reason alone. Companies such as Melbourne's Outgear and Perth's Wilderness Equipment have set and maintained high standards in design and manufacture for many years. Whilst Summit packs don't achieve the same standard in every respect, they appear to be well made, of robust materials, and they cost somewhat less than their better known rivals. The *Expedition* is a single-compartment pack of fairly large capacity with a zipped pocket on the back and another in the lid. It's made of 12-ounce canvas and Cordura, has an adjustable harness, and comes in three sizes. The main compartment of the *Monsoon* (in one size only) has a zip-out divider, and the back pocket is replaced by attachment points for an ice-axe; in other respects it is similar to the smallest of the three *Expedition* packs. The *Expedition* and the *Monsoon* sell for RRP \$315 and \$269, respectively. The *Mallee* is a

frameless, canvas day pack which opens with a zip and has a flat, zipped pocket (RRP \$69.95). Made and distributed by *Cristallo Enterprises*, Tullamarine.

Rocks in the pack?

Kathmandu has released the first in its new range of rucksacks. The *Talus* is a fairly large pack with an adjustable harness and an internal frame, a single main compartment, side compression-straps, side sleeves for tent poles, and pockets on the back and in the lid. It's made of 1000-denier Kodra nylon. RRP \$199 from *Kathmandu* shops.



There seems to be a pattern emerging—Snowgum Navaho Polartec jacket.

CLOTHING AND FOOTWEAR

Wild West

Snowgum Adventure Wear has a new winter clothing range which includes tops in combinations of Polartec 200 and 300 and in a variety of styles. As the names suggest, 'Aztec'

TRIX

Resuscitate your Gore-Tex

First aid for waterproof/breathable clothing, by Andrew Bell

Rainwear made of Gore-Tex and most other waterproof/breathable fabrics is treated to make the outer surface repel water. When such garments are new, you'll notice that water beads up nicely on the outside and is not absorbed by the fabric.

This water-repellency gradually wears off, which results in a significant loss of breathability in fabrics like Gore-Tex as the outer surface quickly becomes saturated.

If you notice that water no longer beads up on the outside of your rainwear, you can restore its water-repellency in two ways. You can wash

your gear and then either throw it in a clothes-drier for about an hour, or iron it. The heat will reactivate the chemical treatment of the fabric, which will work again for quite a while.

Or, if your gear is beyond this and heat fails to restore its water-repellency, several effective reproofing agents are available from outdoor shops. Grangers Superpruf and Nikwax TX.Direct both work well and are recommended by WL Gore, the manufacturer of Gore-Tex.

Wild welcomes readers' contributions to this section; payment is at our standard rate. Send to the address at the end of this department.

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patterns feature prominently. The *Navaho* is a zipped jacket of fairly conventional cut but slightly longer than some, trimmed with wool-and-Lycra ribbing at hem and cuffs. The *Three Moons* is a pullover with draw-cords in the hem and collar, and a loose hood. The *Fort Apache* is a jacket with 'synthetic suede' patches on the shoulders and more embroidered badges than a Scout jamboree—all adding weight even when dry. RRP \$215, \$209 and \$249, respectively.



Telemark ski boots enter the Plastic Age with the Scarpa Terminator. *Glenn Tempest*

Schwarzenegger goes pinning

It had to happen. After almost three years of top-secret development, *Scarpa*, in conjunction with Black Diamond, has finally released the world's first all-plastic Telemark ski boot. Aptly named the *Terminator*, it looks set to make a big impression, just as its Hollywood namesake did. The *Terminator* is constructed from a one-piece shell of specially formulated Apiax nylon which is moulded directly to the midsole and then bonded to a Vibram three-pin sole. This guarantees that the boot will not break down and become soft the way leather models tend to. It also means that feet stay dry and warm for longer than in even the best combination of leather boots and gaiters — there is no welt for melted snow to soak through. A radical 'accordion' hinge combines with a pivoting nylon cuff and a flexible tongue to allow the boot to flex evenly across the ball of the foot. The *Terminator* also features a forward-lean mechanism which locks the cuff into one of two positions. An insulated, removable inner boot, two external buckles and a Velcro strap round the top of the cuff complete the picture. When snow-camping, the inners function as 'tent boots' and the outer shells can be left out in the vestibule overnight without freezing. The *Terminator* is for extreme back-country touring and Telemark racing — you won't need a pair at Lake Mountain or Kiandra! *Scarpa* recommends that it should only be used in conjunction with cable bindings. RRP \$569. From *Outdoor Agencies*.

Glenn Tempest

EQUIPMENT

Footwear battle heats up

New names are continually entering the fray in the battle for bushwalkers' hearts and soles. *K-Swiss* made its first leather tennis shoes in 1966 in the USA and recently began to produce footwear for orienteering and bushwalking. The *Terrati* is a shoe with a full-grain leather or suede upper, a wrap-around tongue of unusual design, and a sole like that of a running shoe. The *Siero-DH* is a boot of medium height with an upper of polyurethane-backed suede. RRP \$165 and \$200, respectively, from *Paddy Pallin* shops.

The *Rugged Outdoor Series* from *Rockport*, the company that reinvented walking round the block and made it into a growth industry, consists of two models — a low-cut shoe and a boot cut around ankle-height. Both have an upper made of several pieces of leather sewn together and bonded to a rubber sole, and a padded, nylon and leather tongue with a partial gusset. A prominent seam around the toe of both models would be difficult to waterproof and suggests that they are not made with extended, wet walks in mind. Priced around \$220 for the shoe and \$260 for the boot. Distributed by *Rockport Australia*, Alexandria, New South Wales.

Take cover

Summit gaiters (see *Summit rucksacks*, above) are simply designed and are made of Cordura and 12-ounce canvas. They close behind with Velcro and press-studs, and have an elastic draw-cord at the top, just below the knee. RRP \$38. Made by *Cristallo Enterprises*.

MISCELLANEOUS

Rope restorer

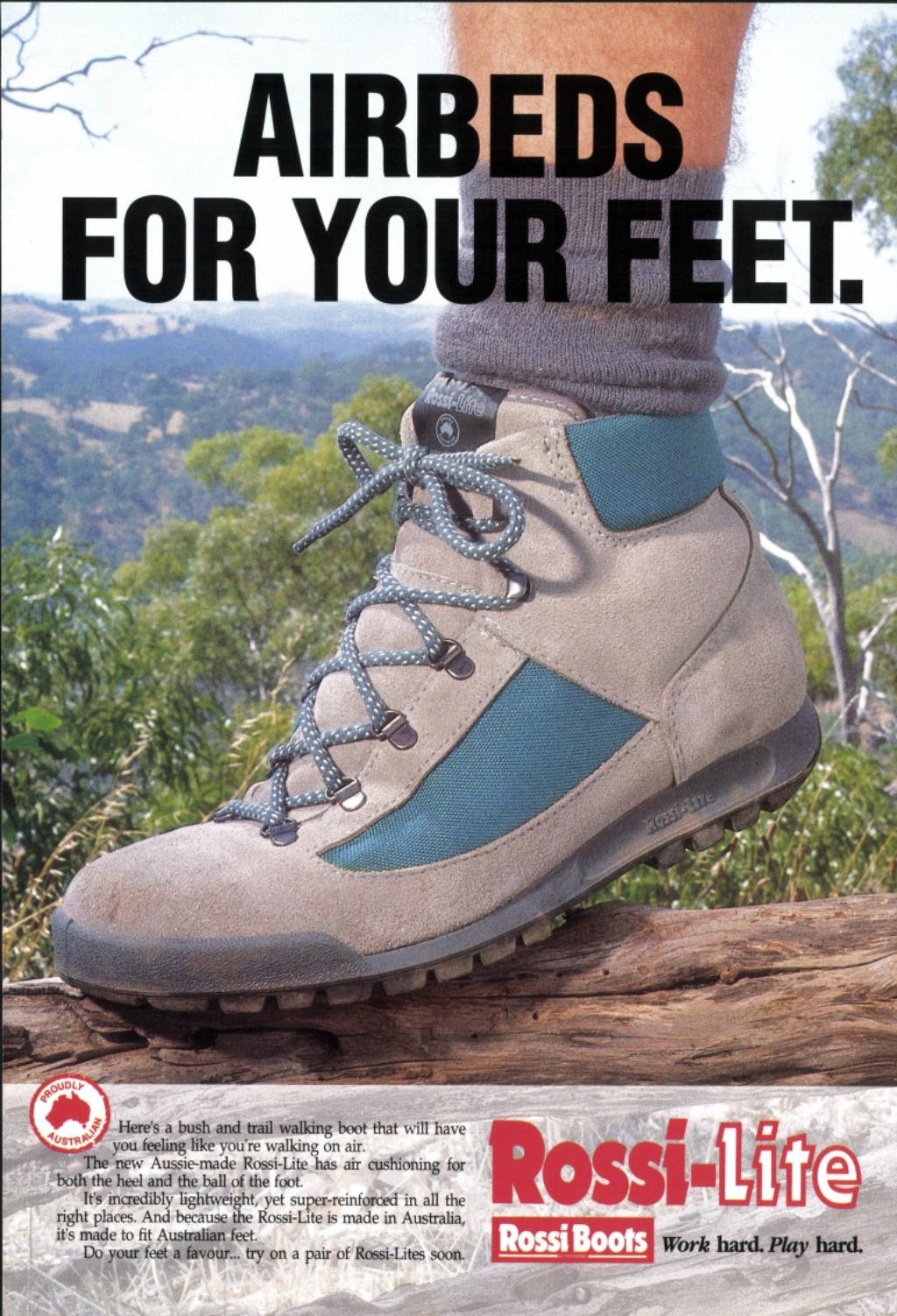
Institutions, rescue organizations and commercial operators, as well as individual climbers, cavers and abseilers, may find the *Dobi rope brush* a worthwhile investment. It's a relatively simple but apparently well-designed device which makes the washing of ropes to remove grit and metal oxides more effective. Its hinged, plastic casing contains four cylindrical brushes laid parallel. The casing and the brushes snap shut around the rope and are moved back and forth along it in a tub of lukewarm, soapy water. The rope is then rinsed and dried. The *Dobi* can cope with ropes between 8 and 13 millimetres in diameter. It's made in New Zealand and distributed in Australia by *Spelcan*, and sells for just under \$30.

Rumours exaggerated

Macpac, well-known New Zealand-born manufacturer of tents, rucksacks and sleeping-bags, wishes to dispel rumours of its demise. It has not closed down; it has closed its Sydney distribution centre and now supplies selected Australian retailers directly from Christchurch. *Macpac* hopes that this change will make distribution of its products within Australia faster and more efficient. Repairs under warranty to *Macpac* goods bought in Australia are done in Melbourne. ■

New products (on loan to *Wild*) and/or information about them, including colour slides, are welcome for possible review in this department. Written items should be typed. Inquiries regarding retail prices are preferably not exceed 200 words. Send to the Editor, *Wild*, PO Box 415, Prahran, Victoria 3181.

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The Kimberley—Horizons of Stone

by Alasdair McGregor and Quentin Chester (Fodder & Stoughton Australia, 1992, RRP \$49.95).

For the serious wilderness adventurer, no region in Australia surpasses the Kimberley. From the deeply indented coastline along the north of Western Australia to the sweeping arc of the King Leopold Ranges 500 kilometres to the south, there is a variety of terrain to exhaust even the stanchest traveller. More important, however, is the Kimberley's sheer size. Larger than Victoria and Tasmania combined, it is the only mountainous region left in Australia where one can undertake a four- or five-week trip without crossing a single road or seeing a single building.

For the less energetic, *The Kimberley—Horizons of Stone* gives a fascinating insight into this little-known region. The easy-to-read text is full of information yet entertaining. The colourful hues of Rob Jung's photography are complemented beautifully by the reproductions of Alasdair McGregor's splendid landscape paintings.

We should be thankful that there are as yet no walking guides published on the Kimberley, and this is certainly not one. But it contains a wealth of information for the enthusiast who wishes to plan a trip.

The diversity of wildlife is extraordinary. From monsoon forests, 'discovered' by scientists in 1965, to rolling eucalypt woodlands, the Kimberley has the State's richest concentration of mammals. The North Kimberley is rare in mainland Australia for its high wilderness quality, great size and remoteness. As a consequence of these attributes, it is believed, no localized extinctions have occurred.

There is an excellent chapter on the richness of the surviving Aboriginal culture. The Kimberley is emblazoned with art in thousands of locations and the reader is taken on a visit to a selected few of these sites. A frieze of elegant dancers adorns one wall. Their rhythmic bodies are clad in an assortment of head-dresses, tassels, skirts, bracelets and epaulettes. In their hands they wave batons and multi-barbed spears. These figures have probably not been repainted since the first artist drew them 10 000 years ago, yet they are vibrant and clear.

Despite these treasures, very little of the Kimberley is at present protected as a National Park. Neither State nor Federal Governments have made much progress towards correcting this anomaly in the last quarter of a century. Perhaps in response to this inaction, the Wilderness Society has proposed a world-class National Park to cover both the marine



The Social Climbers conduct a full-dress rehearsal on Mt Pisco (5752 metres), Peru, for their subsequent dinner party on the summit of Mt Huascarán (6768 metres). Milton Sams

and terrestrial wilderness of the North Kimberley. Once declared, it would be the largest park in Australia and one of the biggest in the world, covering some eight million hectares of land and sea—an area approximately the size of Austria.

It is refreshing at last to read a book on the Kimberley that goes beyond—indeed, almost brushes aside—the well-known tourist showpieces of Purnululu and Geikie Gorge and instead invites the reader on a journey into the complexity of the true wilderness that lies beyond.

For the wilderness traveller, it will be a valuable resource when planning the trip of a lifetime. The armchair traveller will be delighted—and saved the effort of making the trip.

David Poland

Bushwalking in Australia

by John Chapman and Monica Chapman (Lonely Planet, second [revised] edition 1992, RRP \$16.95).

Books of Chapman track notes have become veritable bushwalkers' Bibles in much of the wild country of Victoria and Tasmania—and rightly so. John Chapman, in particular, has been delivering the 'right stuff' to walkers for nearly two decades.

The first edition of *Bushwalking in Australia*, published in 1988, achieved outstanding sales for a bushwalking book. The second deserves to do equally well. It's handsomely presented, with a generous helping of excellent colour photos and detailed maps. Twenty-four indisputably classic walks, most in south-east Australia, are described. Whilst the first 60 or so information-packed pages are mainly intended for the overseas visitor, they contain much that will interest and inform the hard-bitten local as well.

The combination of Chapman track notes and Lonely Planet publication is a winning one.

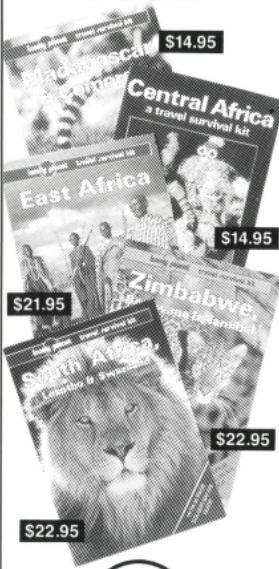
Chris Baxter

Snowy Mountains Walks

(Geehi Bushwalking Club, seventh edition 1991, RRP \$14.95).

This book has a long pedigree. It has been revised six times since it was first published in 1961. The Snowy Mountains have long

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attracted bushwalkers from far and wide, and this guide gives them an excellent starting-point. Its introductory chapters on history, geology, flora and fauna make interesting background reading for people unfamiliar with the region. Walks of one day and longer are described; they range in difficulty and cover a wide variety of terrain.

This revised edition has new, colour maps much clearer than those in earlier editions, but you should still buy the recommended AUSLIG or Land Information Centre maps for a better perspective on the surrounding areas. A chapter on minimal-impact bushwalking has been added and the walk descriptions have been greatly updated. Excellent colour photographs complement the text.

A lot of thought has gone into the walk descriptions. As well as telling you how to get to your destination, they mention many things to look out for on the way—some small cushion plants, for example, or a pair of kestrels known to hunt in a particular spot—and explain how the terrain through which the walk passes was formed.

I strongly recommend this attractive guide.

David Noble

Walking the Wilderness Coast—Cape Conran to Eden

by Peter Cook and Chris Dowd
(Wildcoast Publications, 1992, RRP \$14.95).

If you plan to walk Australia's outstanding south-east coast, buy this book. You won't find better notes anywhere on how to prepare for the ticks, howling gales, uncrossable inlets and other hazards that you may meet on an extended trip in this wild region.

The book covers the coastline from Cape Conran in Victoria to Eden on the south coast of New South Wales with track notes broken into 18 days, and has brief notes for day walks, canoe trips and cycle tours from various base camps. Little information is provided on areas away from the beach.

As well as excellent sections on preparation and planning, there are brief chapters on plants, animals, geomorphology and history, designed as reference material for teachers. That's great, but it is disappointing that no mention is made of the conservation issues which affect the region—and often gain national publicity.

The book is in A5 format. It is printed on a recycled paper which does little for the black-and-white photographs, but is nevertheless a very pleasing volume to hold in the hand.

The maps in the book are of limited value, and this value is further diminished by some puzzling omissions: there is no list of map titles or page numbers; many of the places mentioned in the text are not shown; and there is no legend. To compensate, a comprehensive list of the commercial maps available is provided but, unfortunately, there is no mention in the track notes of which map is relevant to each section.

Does the book have a list of walks, canoeing or cycling trips? The section on base camping and day walks is adequate but uninspiring. For example, it describes only two walks at Mallacoota, the capital of East Gippsland day walks, and both descriptions rehash sections of the notes to the extended

walk along the beach. The canoeing information, though basic, is worth while, but the meagre three-quarters of a page devoted to cycling does not contribute anything. The difficulty of finding where particular places are referred to in the book is compounded by the lack of an index.

These drawbacks aside, the strength of the book lies in the extended walk information, and I would buy it for that alone. The rest is really a bonus.

Grant Da Costa

Head For the Hills—Walks in Victoria

by Andrew Mevissen (Macstyle, 1991, RRP \$14.95).

The subtitle of this book, 'Walks in Victoria', does not describe it accurately. In the introduction, the author writes of '50 bush getaways'; this is much closer to what the book really contains. It does include many walks—most of them easy and aimed at beginners—but some of the chatty and generally informative notes are about things to see on the drive to the walk.

In most cases, the sketch maps included need to be supplemented with another map. References to those maps are given. Photos are fairly sparse, but some excellent line-drawings make up for this. A summary box gives a quick overview of every walk. This is an excellent idea; however, some indexes—of suitable seasons, and standards—would also help readers.

The walk descriptions vary in style: some walks are thoroughly described and others warrant only brief comments. This is not a serious problem as most of the walks follow clearly marked tracks. The text is aimed at the inexperienced, and hardened walkers will find it of limited use, but it would be a good book to start out with in search of places to walk in Victoria.

John Chapman

A History of the Blue Labyrinth, Blue Mountains National Park

by Bruce Cameron (published by the author, 1992, RRP \$11.95).

Bruce Cameron, the author of this interesting book, is a well-known bushwalker and climber based in the Blue Mountains. (His family has an outdoor-equipment shop in Glenbrook.) He grew up with the Blue Labyrinth as his backyard and has been an enthusiast ever since. (The Blue Labyrinth was Myles Dunphy's name for that part of the Blue Mountains south of the railway line between Glenbrook and Wentworth Falls and bounded further south by Lake Burragorang.)

This 162-page book is the outcome of a long labour of love—Cameron's research into the early history of this fascinating area. The long list of notes at the end of each chapter—many of them the result of personal communication with people who must be quite elderly—testifies to the thoroughness and value of this research. The book is not intended as a set of track notes though it is set out in a similar way, with prominent features such as the Ironbarks, Euroka, the Oaks and Erskine Creek described from an historical perspective. The inspiring feats of pioneer bushwalkers are described as well as places that were special to the Aborigines.

Nowadays the Blue Labyrinth does not have the savage reputation of other parts of the Blue Mountains such as the canyon country of the Carmarthen Labyrinth or the Wollangambe Wilderness. It is, nevertheless, where a great number of the present generation (including the reviewer) learned the fundamentals of bushwalking. Many of them still love to go back; to renew their early experiences or to search out new places of interest—perhaps as an escape from 'urban hyperlasia', to quote from the book's preface. They will want to purchase a copy of this book. It can be obtained from National Parks & Wildlife Service visitor centres in the Blue Mountains and at selected bookshops.

DN

Crosbie Morrison—Voice of Nature

by Graham Pizzey (Victoria Press, 1992, RRP \$26.95).

Known to many thousands of people on both sides of the Tasman in the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s, Crosbie Morrison became a household name for his enchanting and entertaining natural history radio broadcasts. Indeed, he was something of a celebrity. For a time, his weekly programme rated higher than any other in Victoria, and a 1952 poll found that Morrison was Victoria's most popular radio personality. A strong believer in the value of education to protect what he then saw (over 40 years ago) as Australia's seriously threatened natural resources, Morrison was a conservationist ahead of his time. For example, at an influential conference in Canberra in 1950, and subsequently, he argued convincingly that most, if not all, environmental problems flow from forest destruction.

Morrison prepared material with a view to an eventual biography before his death in 1958. Based on this material and with the full co-operation of Morrison's family, eminent Victorian naturalist Graham Pizzey has meticulously researched and evaluated Morrison's unique contribution to conservation and natural history education. In doing this, he has used his own considerable knowledge of the subject to very good effect. The result is a valuable account of Morrison's career. (Among other things, Morrison had regular and widely read nature articles published in Melbourne newspapers, was founding editor of the popular but unprofitable natural history magazine *Wild Life*, public lecturer, museum trustee and National Parks campaigner.)

It is surprising that apart from research as a student in the Great Barrier Reef, the book describes only two visits by Morrison to places 'off the beaten track'—a walk in the Victorian Alps assisted by pack-horses, and an exploration of central Australia with air support.

Crosbie Morrison quotes at unusual length from material written by Morrison. It would have been more interesting if, instead, there had been more information about the man himself. One of the photo captions, for a picture of a group of people said to include Morrison, is obviously incorrect as Morrison is not in the photo, apparently having been cropped out. Despite these points, *Crosbie Morrison* is a scholarly and readable account of the work of a great Australian.

CB

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TOUR OPERATOR

Spoils and Spoilers—A History of Australians Shaping Their Environment

by Geoffrey Bolton (Allen & Unwin, second edition 1992, RRP \$17.95).

Captain Melville, bringing convicts to New South Wales on the Third Fleet, was cheered to see 'sperm whales in great plenty' some 70 kilometres from Sydney Heads: 'We sailed through different shoals of them from 12 o'clock in the day until sunset, all round the horizon, as far as I could see from the mast head.' Within 60 years the whales were gone, and the whaling fleet swinging uselessly at anchor in Sydney Harbour came to be called 'Rotten Row'.

Australians have often been remarkably optimistic about the extent of our natural resources. Commissioner Fry of the NSW public service informed an official inquiry in 1847 that the Big Scrub in the Richmond River cedar country could not be cleared for five or six centuries. Settlers armed only with axes had cleared it and were farming it in 30 years.

In the face of remarkable exploitation of Australia's natural treasures, the environmental movement slowly grew, from its stumbling beginnings in the 19th century to its precarious prominence of today.

Professor Bolton's environmental history of Australia covers a vast range of fascinating material, much of it surprising. *Spoils and Spoilers* deals with the impact of British settlement, the destruction of the forests, pastoral modification of the land, the suburban spread, mining, planning, and the rise of the greens. This second edition has been updated and continued into the 1990s.

Bolton is concerned about the attitudes and social trends underlying the changes to our environment. He explores the free-market theories which have dominated Australian politics in the 1980s and concludes: 'Wilder-ness conservation would never have come about in Australia if left to the forces of the market-place.'

Bolton will be well known to ABC radio listeners as the Boyer lecturer for 1992. He is general editor of *The Oxford History of Australia*.

Spoils and Spoilers is an important book which again and again shows the folly of our approach to the environment. As the author observes: 'The exploitation of the environment for short-term gains has always been followed by financial and human costs for later generations; but it has sometimes been possible to learn from error, and occasionally even to avoid it.' Let us hope that Professor Bolton's book will help us to learn from history.

Brian Walters

Threatened Animal Species of New South Wales

by Ken Klippen (Total Environment Centre, 1992, RRP \$14.95).

As a conservation issue, threatened species are the flavour of the decade. In many ways they are the successor to local causes like the Franklin River and the rain forest; their plight adds strength to the arguments of conservationists throughout the country. This is particularly true in New South Wales, where logging was stopped in a forest because it

contained rare and endangered species. Consequently, when lists like Ken Klippen's are translated into legislation, they can have an enormous political and economic impact.

This book is a good start for anyone interested in threatened animals in New South Wales—a reasonable summary of ideas at the time of its publication. I particularly like its attention to individual invertebrate species. Too often ignored because we know so little about them, invertebrates contain just as much unique DNA as the big, adaptable cuddles about which we make so much fuss, and are often much better indicators of environmental health.

To some extent the book has been overtaken by the publication of national reviews of the status of Australian animals. It could, however, be updated with ease. If done by independent bodies like the Total Environment Centre at five-year intervals, this would ensure that the campaigns concerning threatened animals are based on the latest information.

Stephen Garnett

The Coast and Hinterland in Flower

by IR McCann (Victorian National Parks Association, 1992, RRP \$17.95).

Anyone who has tried to photograph flowers in their natural setting knows how difficult it is to obtain satisfying portraits. Though the subjects don't fly or run away like other wildlife, they have a nasty habit of shivering in the slightest breeze and demand an impossible depth of field for clarity of focus. Ian McCann is evidently a man of great skill and enormous patience, for the photography on which this booklet relies is impeccable. What is more, he has managed to include in every picture the nuances of flower or leaf structure that enable one plant to be distinguished from all others.

The book is not comprehensive, but for anyone wandering through the spring heathlands it is more than adequate. Perhaps it could have included pictures of the dangerous weeds listed in the introduction as early detection of such threats is the key to their control—but then, the purpose of the book is to increase appreciation of the bush, and this it does admirably.

SG

Everest—From Sea to Summit

by Tim Macartney-Snape (Australian Geographic, 1992, RRP \$29.95).

As its title suggests, *Everest* is an account of the first ascent of the highest peak on earth from sea level, by Macartney-Snape. Coming from someone who has pioneered a bold new route on Mt Everest (see *Wild* no 15), Macartney-Snape's latest exploit, involving many days of hot and dusty 'road-bashing', a high-altitude approach trek and, finally, an ascent of Mt Everest by its original route in almost congested conditions, may seem eccentric to some.

Regardless of your view of the undertaking—a vast one by any measure—*Everest* is an uncommonly worthwhile book. Initial impressions are favourable: it is attractively designed and printed, with photos and maps of a high standard. You don't have to read many pages before you realize that this is no

ordinary expedition book and, indeed, that Macartney-Snape is not an ordinary person. (He was among those included in the latest New Year honours list.) Apart from his obvious qualities of great drive, physical endurance and courage, *Everest* shows him to be humble, unusually frank and honest, and a wise observer of the world around him with its enormous beauty and its serious problems. The stirring and informative description of Macartney-Snape's adventure is enhanced rather than interrupted by generous lashings of his firmly held personal philosophy. In recent years this outlook on life has been markedly influenced by the teachings of Jeremy Griffith, author of *Free: The End of the Human Condition*. Macartney-Snape frequently refers to that book and its author throughout *Everest*, and there is even an appendix ('Understanding Ourselves') explaining Griffith's teaching, which I still find hard to understand, let alone accept.

Everest is a worthwhile contribution to human understanding. If you enjoy an excellent story of Himalayan adventure which gives considerable insight into the human aspects of such an undertaking, you're in for a wonderful bonus.

CB

Across the Top

by Sorrel Wilby (Pan Macmillan, 1992, RRP \$24.95).

I am disillusioned whenever the underlying theme of a new addition to my extensive Himalayan library turns out to be the satiation of the competitive desire of Westerners for peak achievement and fame. It cheapens a myriad of personal memories of the beauty, mystery, timelessness and spirituality of the Himalayas—memories of my own wanderings in the same frontier locations.

The impact of this latest epic—subtitled 'The World's First Complete Traverse of the Himalaya'—may be a little lessened by periodic retreats to the luxury of embassy living and gourmet food, but the feat it describes remains a superb endeavour. Wilby and a companion covered 6500 kilometres on foot through incredible terrain and in extreme climatic conditions.

I was tempted to give up on the book in the early chapters. First, by the number of expletives and the prosaic nature of the writing. Wilby does not need to resort to such language. Later in the book she demonstrates a comprehensive, sensitive and highly descriptive vocabulary—though the metaphors in the first few chapters tend to be somewhat laboured and overstated.

Secondly, the early account of the Northern Areas of Pakistan, where the couple lurch naively from one melodrama to the next, seems sensationalized and unsympathetic. Nor did I feel a need for the 'soap opera' of the intimate details of their relationship in the early sections. Increasingly, though, as they progress through India and Bhutan to Arunachal Pradesh, the narrative becomes well-informed and perceptive, and I felt compelled to continue reading.

At times one learns more about the author than about the context: there is no doubt that Sorrel Wilby, adventurer, occupies centre stage. None the less, she impresses with a deep

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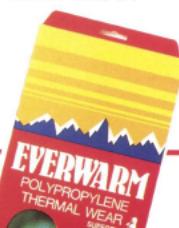
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empathy for the landscape and the people who occupy it, and cogently stresses the enormous ecological and sociological challenges they face.

Although *Across the Top* strips the Himalayas somewhat of their legendary aura of mystery and romance, I recommend it as a remarkable, fascinating and highly readable account. It has added to my own knowledge and fuelled my desire to fill the gaps in my Himalayan travel.

Judy Parker

The Social Climbers

by Chris Darwin and John Amy
(Sun, 1991, RRP \$16.95).

Chris Darwin's love of bizarre adventure and his strong desire to do something exceptional in life led him to become the instigator of a most elaborate visual joke: the world's highest dinner party. Choosing the summit of Peru's highest mountain, Mt Huascarán (6768 metres), as the venue and convincing a group of total amateurs that such a fundamentally pointless exercise would be utterly satisfying and worthwhile, the Social Climbers, as they called themselves, set about making Darwin's absurd idea a ridiculous reality.

It proved to be not only the world's highest dinner party but also its coldest (-37°C), shortest (ten minutes), driest (there was nothing to drink because the wine froze solid), and probably the one which set the most 'world records'. It fulfilled Darwin's criteria for an exceptional achievement: 'a single achievement which stood by itself and was amusing, worthwhile and impressive'.

This lighthearted account of the considerable hardships and risks braved by the team reveals the personalities, interrelationships and emotions of its members and what they gained personally from the experience. It is a truly remarkable tale written with complete openness and honesty; an extraordinary mountaineering book for ordinary non-mountaineers.

Sue Baxter

Wilderness Women— Stories of New Zealand Women at Home in the Wilderness

by Christine Diana and Pip Lynch
(Penguin Books, 1989, RRP \$21).

Relatively little has been written about the outstanding role women have played in pioneering the world's wilderness areas.

Whilst this book focuses specifically on the achievements of nine Kiwi adventurers, anyone with a love of the outdoors and a zest for adventure will enjoy it.

The nine women come from a wide range of backgrounds; each has made her mark in a unique way. In many cases, personal diary extracts and anecdotal records are used to enhance the authors' tales.

There's the story of Maud Moreland, who is fondly remembered for her epic journeys on horseback. In the early 1900s one such trek took her over the Southern Alps and down the west coast long before much of the area was opened up for farming.

Then there's Louie Roberts, whose mountaineering exploits took her to the summits of many of New Zealand's peaks,

including some notable first ascents by a woman.

Margaret Bradshaw, a geologist and Antarctic veteran, recounts her two-month trip towing toboggans to the Ohio Range, 1200 kilometres from Scott Base. She was the world's first female scientific leader of a deep field party in Antarctica.

It would certainly be hard to outdo Louise Sutherland's 35 years of exploring the world on a bicycle. Her solo trips took her over 4500 kilometres, with particularly interesting experiences in the Middle East and the Amazon jungle. And in all that time, she proudly notes, she only suffered one puncture!

These are but a few of the adventurous women the book introduces. Others are famous for great achievements in botany, mining and tramping (bushwalking to Australians!). The book is well illustrated throughout with black-and-white photographs, sketches and maps and is well worth reading.

Monica Perryman

For Its Own Sake

Video (Koganavich Productions, 1992, RRP \$16.95 for private use, \$39.95 for departmental or corporate use).

Paper Trail—The Life and Times of a Woodchip

Video (Ronin Films, 1992, RRP \$49.50 for private use; higher prices for groups).

Australia is home to eight per cent of the world's species, more than any other first-world country. But this rich heritage has already been savagely depleted, largely due to the mentality of Australians as conquerors of nature. *For Its Own Sake* is set in the Southwest of Tasmania. The film seeks to allow the landscape to speak for itself: the shots of cloud-filled valleys and soaring peaks are held for some time, allowing the eye to wander over the scene and take it in.

The contemplative mood is enhanced by thoughtful interviews with Bob Brown and others. One of the more memorable quotes is from Bob Brown: 'Wilderness is like love and beauty; you can't buy it, but you can't live life without it.'

For Its Own Sake manages to convey the interconnection not only of species on the planet, but also of the issues confronting our society.

Paper Chase is a film about the use of our native forests for woodchips. It contains many alarming statistics and is a powerful educational tool about the way we are treating our natural heritage.

Over half of Australia's forest cover has been cut down, and of what remains, only 16 per cent is in National Parks or reserves. Our hardwoods make exceptionally good paper, and over one-third of Australia's forestry goes to Japan, a country which consumes 40 per cent of all trees removed from the world's forests. It is remarkable that Australia, the world's least forested continent, supplies half of Japan's woodchip needs.

As David Paul, a consultant, says in *Paper Chase*: 'Australia has not begun to explore the possibilities of using non-wood-fibre pulps. We have that opportunity, but while wood is readily available and reasonably cheap there

is no reason to change the status quo. This is not the case overseas.'

While native forests are accessible, there has also been no incentive to plant hardwood plantations. Overseas, large eucalypt plantations are now coming on stream. The forest industry today is trying to sell off the old-growth forests before they become worthless.

Although Japan uses so many of the world's trees, at least it is advanced in recycling, and 50 per cent of the paper used in Japan is recycled. Australians are second only to North Americans in the amount of garbage they produce, and 27 per cent of this is paper.

Paper Chase poses some important questions. One man who has seen the suffering caused by dioxin poisoning in Japan asks: 'What really is affluence? What kind of society really is a rich society?'

In effect, millions of dollars of taxpayers' money are being used in Australia each year to subsidize the destruction of our native forests. Perhaps we do need, as suggested by one commentator in *Paper Chase*, to design a new economics which has as its basis the ecology of the forests. Ecology is given; the economy can be modified.

Some remarkably good films are being made about the environmental issues we face today. Although different, these two films complement each other and would form the basis of an excellent study unit in secondary schools.

BW

Sea, Ice and Rock

by Chris Bonington
and Robin Knox-Johnston
(Hodder & Stoughton, 1992, RRP \$49.95).

The climbing darling of British media (Bonington) and his nautical equivalent (Knox-Johnston) join forces for a jolly *Boys' Own* Paperesque escapade to Greenland. Johnston's job is to get landlubber Bonington to *terra firma* near their chosen, unclimbed, mountain; Bonington's is to get non-climber Johnston up that mountain.

The story itself is little over 100 pages, and even this figure is achieved partly by the use of a large type-face. (There are also three appendices.) One wonders whether there is enough nautical material in *Sea, Ice and Rock* to interest armchair sailors on the one hand, or sufficient climbing to induce climbers to buy it, on the other. The hefty cover price may help to answer this in the negative despite this slight work's relatively lavish production.

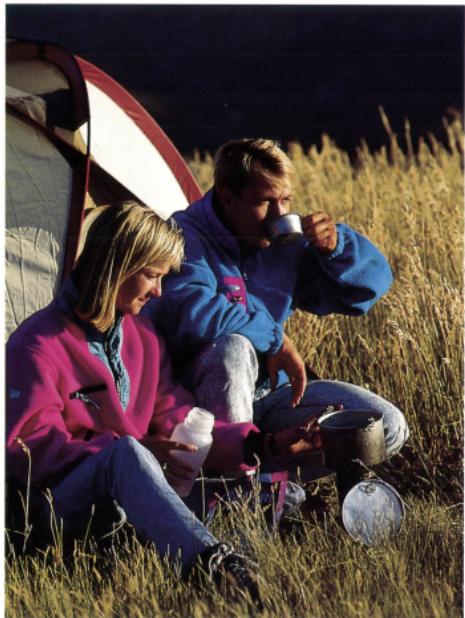
CB

The Bicentennial National Trail Guidebook

(Bicentennial National Trail, 1991, in 12 parts, RRP \$9.95 each).

Over 20 years ago, the Alpine Walking Track was established in Victoria, New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory. In 1988 a horse-riding trail was established, extending from Healesville, Victoria, to Cooktown, Queensland.

Although it avoids the Alpine Walking Track for the most part, in many places the trail uses long-established walking routes, such as the walking track from Howitt Hut down to the Dry River and on into the



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REVIEWS

Wonnangatta. This is steep terrain and a narrow walking track. It is formidable and unpleasant when walkers are met by a party of horses.

Horse-riding is a legitimate recreational pursuit in the right areas, but it is not appropriate in delicate alpine or remote wilderness environments (where it has become popular). This is compounded by the fashion of large parties of riders, often over 20 horses at a time. Walkers already restrict their numbers in order to minimize their impact. Each horse on a track does more damage than several walkers. In this context, it is a pity that the guide, funded as it was by the Federal Department of the Environment, fails to advocate any limit to party size.

The Bicentennial National Trail will add to pressure on our wild places—and so will these guides.

BW

Map of the Round Mountain Area (NSW) and the Northern Approaches to Mt Jagungal

by SR Brookes (Victorian Mountain Tramping Club, issue four 1993, RRP \$4.50).

This updated edition of a popular 1:50 000 map includes new information obtained in the field and from aerial photographs, and covers the area east from Dargal Mountain to Happy Jacks Plain and north from Strumbo Hill to Round Mountain. In between is the popular walking country around Wheelers Hut, Pretty Plain, the Toolong Range and, of course, Mt Jagungal.

Glenn van der Knijff

Other titles received

Africa on a Shoestring

by Geoff Crowther, Hugh Finlay, Jon Murray, Deanna Swaney and Richard Everist (Lonely Planet, sixth edition 1992, RRP \$37.95).

Bangkok City Guide

by Joe Cummings (Lonely Planet, 1992, RRP \$11.95).

Fossils

by Cyril Walker and David Ward (Harper Collins, 1992, RRP \$29.95).

Indonesia-A Travel Survival Kit

by Robert Storey, Dan Spitzer, Richard Nebesky, James Lyon and Tony Wheeler (Lonely Planet, third edition 1992, RRP \$31.95).

Israel-A Travel Survival Kit

by Neil Tilbury (Lonely Planet, second edition 1992, RRP \$22.95).

Thailand-A Travel Survival Kit

by Joe Cummings (Lonely Planet, fifth edition 1992, RRP \$24.95).

The Rainforest Legacy:

Volume Three-Rainforest History, Dynamics and Management

edited by Garry Werren and Peter Kershaw (Australian Government Publishing Service, 1992, RRP \$24.95).

West Africa-A Travel Survival Kit

by Alex Newton (Lonely Planet, second edition 1992, RRP \$27.95).

World Trees

by Allen Coombes (Harper Collins, 1992, RRP \$29.95). ■

Publications for possible review are welcome. Send to the Editor, *Wild*, PO Box 415, Prahran, Victoria 3181.

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2 D'JERRY, PHIL

Kakadu articles blast

I am writing in response to your two articles on Kakadu in *Wild* no 45. I am a resident of Kakadu, a keen bushwalker in the park, I have worked as a bushwalking guide here and have been employed by the park as an interpretation officer. Both these articles contained inaccuracies, and neither adequately addressed the importance of the park to the traditional owners nor the significance of their role in the management of the park.

Kakadu is Aboriginal land leased to the Australian Government and managed jointly by the Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service (ANPWS) with the traditional owners. This point was ignored in both articles.

In 'Kakadu', David Coe pays lip-service to the aboriginality of Kakadu, commenting that 'those who visit the area must take (the Aboriginal people's knowledge of both creative and destructive spirits) into account'. Coe obviously did not heed his own advice. He admits camping in a cave with rock art, which is both against park regulations and disrespectful to the wishes of the traditional owners.

Coe's confident regurgitation of many place names in his article and on his map is another indication of his disregard for Aboriginal sensitivity. 'Surprise Falls', 'Graveside Falls' and 'Cascades Gorge' are all labels of convenience conferred on them by white bushwalkers. None of these names appears on any official maps. As bushwalking lingo, these terms are no doubt quite handy; however, to put them on a map as recognized place names is an injustice to the traditional owners.

Coe's statement that 'fuel stoves are not required in Kakadu' is inaccurate and misleading. Fuel stoves are required in some of Kakadu's remnant monsoon forests such as Guborra. Fuel stoves are also encouraged in other places that receive a relatively high impact from bushwalkers and during some wet season times are essential for cooking.

Coe's article is a worthy accompaniment to Phil Smith's equally bland and superficial piece 'Kakadu: Catch It While You Can'. The title implies that the reader must rush off and 'experience' the real Kakadu before it becomes irrevocably swamped with tourists, four-wheel-drivers, miners and fishers (sorry, Phil, 'fishermen' does not pass the Public Service Non-sexist Language Recommendations). Smith suggests to readers to 'make themselves heard' in order to influence the direction of Kakadu's change. However, not once does he make it clear where his personal concerns lie, except to imply that change ought to be 'manageable and reasonable'. To a mining company or a shareholder of BHP, CRA or ERA, this would mean digging up our National Parks. Smith's lack of critical analysis is lamentable.

The 'many thousands of hectares of flat, dry, stunted scrub' are the most diverse of all Kakadu's ecosystems, and for him to describe the miners' desire to exploit 'only' the woodlands shows a complete lack of understanding of the ecology of Kakadu. Kakadu is unique in that it protects the entire river system of the South Alligator River, and a mine in the woodlands at Coronation Hill, which is at the headwaters of this river, could affect the whole river system which extends over 200 kilometres to the sea. To place this article in the 'Wild Conservation' page is an insult to *Wild's* conservation-minded readers.

It is difficult for many Australians to see and experience such a wild area as Kakadu, and in my opinion it is and will be one of Australia's most unique, vast and remote true wilderness parks for Australians to enjoy—and be proud of protecting for many generations to come. As *Wild* philosophically [and practically—see the *Editorial* on page 3. Editor] supports the conservation of wilderness and tries to educate its readers about such issues, it is a shame that *Wild* has failed to give readers an accurate reflection of Kakadu—a World Heritage National Park.

In future, *Wild's* Editor should check with Kakadu management to be sure of getting it right...

Chris Cox
Jabiru, NT

Utter rubbish

After reading the letter from Graham Ross in *Wild* no 47 I was thoroughly enraged...

The utter rubbish he wrote about 'my right to hunt my own food'! I bet he isn't on his deathbed, threatened by starvation, so that he desperately needs to hunt ducks to keep himself alive. If he likes ducks so much, why doesn't he go to the local supermarket and buy some? But that wouldn't give him a challenge. He wouldn't then be able to brag to his mates... What right does Ross have to dictate to the rest of Australia? I am sure that there are at least three times as many people in Australia who are keen bird-watchers than there are duck hunters. I am an avid bird-watcher...but Ross and his comrades are literally killing off my hobby. My hobby isn't destructive...

Ross...can boycott and complain all he likes but, in the end, he'll be the loser. The green movement is growing rapidly. We are no longer going to put up with people like Ross and with his human-supremacy attitude. In 200 years Australia has won itself the title of having the world's worst environmental record—something no Australian should be proud of.

Gordon Woodward
Kenthurst, NSW

...I didn't send away the duck-shooting card in *Wild* no 46—apathy. But after reading about the threats to you and your advertisers in *Wild* no 47, I sent the card off quick smart...

Greg Powell
Valentine, NSW

Luna Park?

People already dismayed by the gratuitous lopping of the spreading gum at the top right-hand corner of the Pines and the construction of a highly conspicuous footbridge spanning the gully adjacent to the Centenary Park circle road in the Arapiles-Toona State Park have found little encouragement in Victoria's Department of Conservation & Environment's latest plans. Foremost amongst these is the construction of a viewing platform for the physically disabled at the summit picnic area. Whilst one can scarcely question the right of physically disabled people to enjoy access to the park, one can question the degree of environmental disarray that will be perpetrated in their name if the construction of this platform goes ahead. As it is, the view from the summit picnic area is magnificent—a circumstance that is greatly enhanced by the minimal nature of the amenities provided. I would have thought that the simplest and least damaging management strategy would be to retain this spot in its present, uncluttered form, thus affording the physically disabled the same magnificent view that those of us in the know have been enjoying for some time now.

Charlie Creese
Carlton, Vic

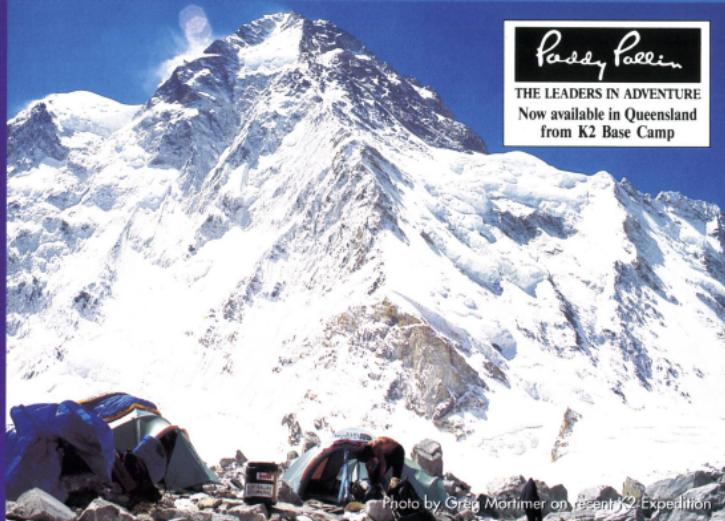
A dose of the nasties

Once upon a time...I used to drink water direct from our mountain streams but, with rare exceptions, not now. I have used a variety of water purifiers in past years and, in the process, experienced two bouts of giardia—a nasty business...I have never had problems when I have boiled water for between five and 20 minutes, depending on the source. This method, however, consumes a lot of fuel. (I don't light fires these days.)

Recently I purchased a Katadyn Pocket Filter, having meant to do so since about 1987 when I read about them in *Wild*. The cost was a little off-putting, as was the weight. About two weeks after purchasing this filter, *Wild* no 47 included a brief survey of water purifiers and filters. It appears obvious from this survey that portable filters, to be effective, need to be combined with other membrane filters to ensure removal of the many bacteria and viruses, chemicals.

I have been concerned for some time about correct handling, in the bush, of the available portable filters. In particular, I'm concerned to

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avoid contamination between the 'contaminated' water hose which has been in the water supply and the spout when the unit is returned to its container. (The use of disinfectants is not recommended on ceramic type filters)...In the meantime I shall continue to boil my water—a belt-and-braces job—just to make sure that I have done my best to avoid another dose of the 'nasties'.

If the author of the *Wild* survey, Will Steffen, has any information on the prevention of cross-contamination in the field-use of portable filters, I am sure it would be well received. You can imagine the process which may be involved to avoid contamination between hose and spout when the unit is continually being returned to its container. It seems that boiling is the simplest means of preventing infection, after the removal of residual particulates.

John Mather
Blackheath, NSW

I use a water filter system which seems to do the job and is a lot cheaper than most of the systems covered in the survey in *Wild* no 47.

The main component is an 'on the tap' filter. I use a James Hardie product called a Commandomatic but there are several similar types on the market costing between \$11 and \$13. On the inlet side, a 300 millimetre length of plastic home-irrigation pipe forms a tight push-on fit and a funnel at the other end gives enough pressure head to force the water through quite quickly.

The complete unit can be broken down to three small components for easy packing, and its weight 'wet' is only about 200 grams. After each trip I back-flush the filter with boiling water to kill any residual nasties trapped inside.

Don Owers
Dudley, NSW

Wimps

I enclose a photograph of six bushwalkers who made a 'reunion' return visit to Hinchinbrook Island last September after 38 years. I have also provided a snap of the same, considerably more youthful, six just after their trip in 1953.

Members of the University of Queensland Bushwalking Club, we made our original visit in January 1953 and spent ten eventful days on the east coast. We were landed at South Ramsay Bay and set off to climb Mt Bowen the next morning, in pre-wet-season climatic discomfort, having travelled by train up to Ingham from Brisbane.

Our main objective was Mt Bowen, which had been climbed in the 1930s by Romeo Lahey solo from the west (Gayundah Creek), and probably by others. Hinchinbrook was coming under increasing bushwalking interest in the early 1950s and several groups experienced the special difficulties Mt Bowen offered for ascents, namely thick vegetation, precipitous terrain and usually hot weather. A party from Scots College, Warwick, with John Béchervaise, had been unsuccessful in their Mt Bowen attempt from the Ramsay Bay side in August 1952. Four men from Tully finally climbed Mt Bowen in December 1952, following a route from Missionary Bay in the north.

We had two climbing parties. One (Broadbent, Comino, Stephenson) attempted the South-east Ridge by the Thumb, and the other (Goadby, McLeod, Stewart) set out to ascend by Warrawilla Creek and the main north saddle. The climbs took three and two days, respectively.

The South-east Ridge party probably made the first ascent of the Thumb, and the saddle party, of the North Peak. The two routes were extremely arduous and are described in an article published in *Outdoors and Fishing*, November 1953. Broadbent carried a large

day we walked across Magic Saddle to revisit our original base-camp site but, for some reason, no one seemed to want to continue to Nina Peak, which we had climbed in 1953, nor to revisit Mt Bowen!

Jon Stephenson
Townsville, Qld

Woosy

I have been an avid follower of *Wild* since its inception in the early 1980s, but have only started subscribing over the past couple of years.



Six intrepid walkers return to Queensland's Hinchinbrook Island 38 years after making the first ascent of what is now the normal route up Mt Bowen, and of its neighbour, the Thumb. From left, David Stewart, Jon Stephenson, John Comino, Ian McLeod, Geoff Broadbent and Geoff Goadby at the site of their original base camp. **Right**, at Mulligan Creek in 1953. (The film suffered water damage.) Can you match the faces? *Jon Stephenson collection*

quartz crystal we found on the way to the top of the Thumb, and used it to cap the cairn we built to record our visit. This quartz crystal subsequently had some interesting travels, being removed by a visiting party as a souvenir! Later visitors were irate to discover it had gone, but an 'inquiry' located it and engineered its return; we hope it will not be dislodged again!

The 1953 visit was memorable because the wet season broke the day after we reached Bowen. We walked south down the east coast to George Point in very heavy flood conditions and were picked up fit but well mildewed. We enjoyed hospitable 'R&R' in Lucinda because it was floodbound. We had fun getting back to Brisbane!

The reunion visit was achieved more graciously. We 'camped' on three boats moored in North Zoe Inlet and enjoyed some nice walks in this exquisite wilderness. One



As Managing Editor of a quality magazine such as *Wild*, I am curious to know how you decide what appears on the front cover.

With due respect, it is my observation that the front covers of the more recent issues of *Wild* are quite ordinary. Perhaps a touch 'woosy'.

May I suggest a more exhilarating scene depicting one of the adventure sports your magazine promotes?

What do your readers think?

Winston Foun
Glenorchy, Tas

The most important point

I am writing about the advertisement on page 106 of *Wild* no 47. I find this ad disturbing on three grounds: 1. It is sexist. 'Expose

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WILDFIRE

yourself...' with a picture of a relatively lightly dressed young female model. 2. The model's pose would probably be physically impossible if her pack was in fact loaded. 3. The most important point; where in 'the great Australian outdoors' was the background photo taken?

I will not be dealing with this company as long as this is the attitude they display to outdoor enthusiasts in Australia and I urge you to review future copy from them before putting it into print. A copy of this letter will be sent to the company concerned.

Richard Reeve
Ferny Creek, Vic

Pith-up

Recently a friend and I passed by Upper Jameson Hut while on a walk to Mt McDonald, and we noticed a couple of young men with four-wheel-drive vehicles relaxing with cans in hand.

On returning to the hut the following day, I was absolutely appalled at the mess that had been left in and around the hut. We counted at least 45 empty cans in the hut's fireplace (as well as an unattended fire). There was another dozen strewn around the camp fire outside, together with a number of smashed stubbies. Approximately three metres from the hut door, a hole had been dug into which another dozen empty cans had been thrown.

However, what appalled me most was the fresh pile of human faeces on the grass no more than five metres from the door. No attempt had been made to bury this waste, let alone at an acceptable distance into the bush; indeed, it was sparsely covered by a few sheets of toilet paper. There was more toilet paper (some of it used) strewn around the hut and beside the river.

While not wishing to discredit the four-wheel-drive fraternity generally, it incenses me to see this type of arrant disregard of common human decency perpetrated by a small group of mindless degenerates who care neither for the environment, those who wish to enjoy it or, indeed, for the reputation of the four-wheel-drive community as a whole. They should simply stay at home.

John Tharratt
Rochester, Vic

Remove it if too excited

I would like to add to what appeared in *Wild* no 44 about gas canister stoves performing poorly in cold weather. The reason for poor performance is simply lack of heat to vaporize the fuel. (Gas fuel is stored as a liquid in the canister.) The solution is simply to supply some more heat, but gently. I have a Gaz Globetrotter which works well in cold weather if I start it after warming the canister using body heat, perhaps only from the hands. Once the stove is burning it can be used to warm some water to stand it in to continue the supply of heat. Remove the stove immediately if it gets too excited.

Arthur Knight
Lindisfarne, Tas

Readers' letters are welcome (with sender's full name and address, for verification). A selection will be published in this column. Letters of less than 200 words are more likely to be printed. Write to the Editor, *Wild*, PO Box 415, Prahran, Victoria 3181.

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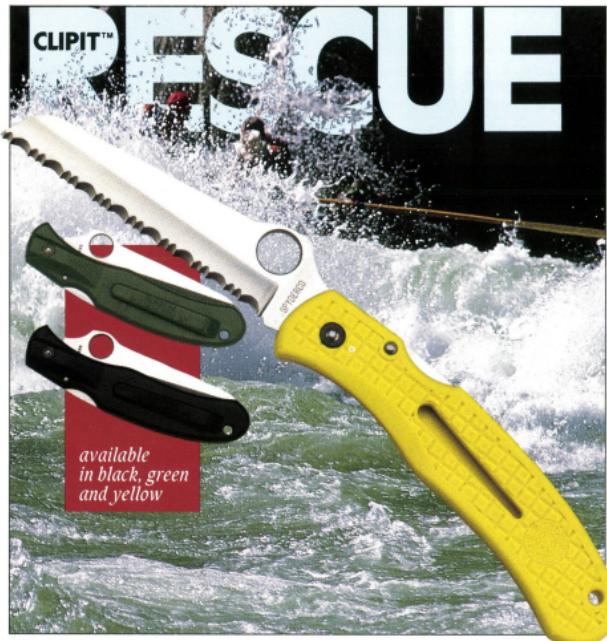
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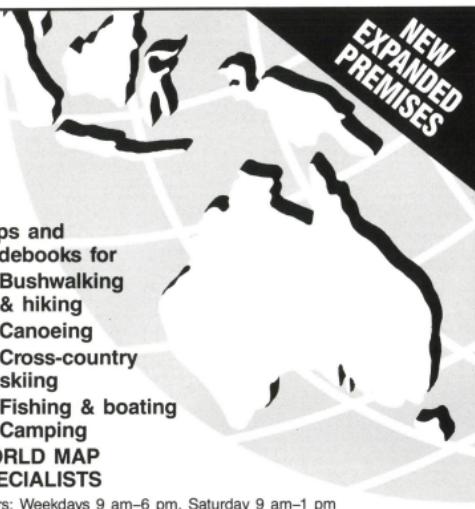


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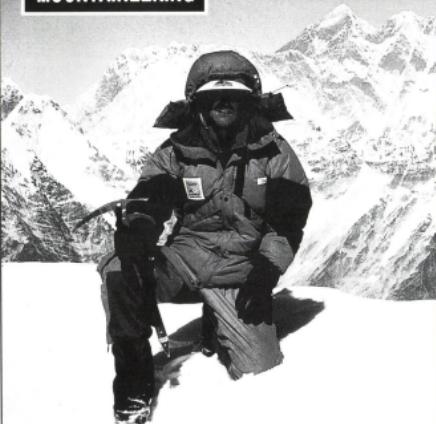
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who venture outside, particularly adventure guides and leaders. Cost \$500 per person, fully inclusive. For details, contact Snowy River Expeditions, Buchan, Vic 3885. Phone (051) 52 3478. ACN 051 55 9353.

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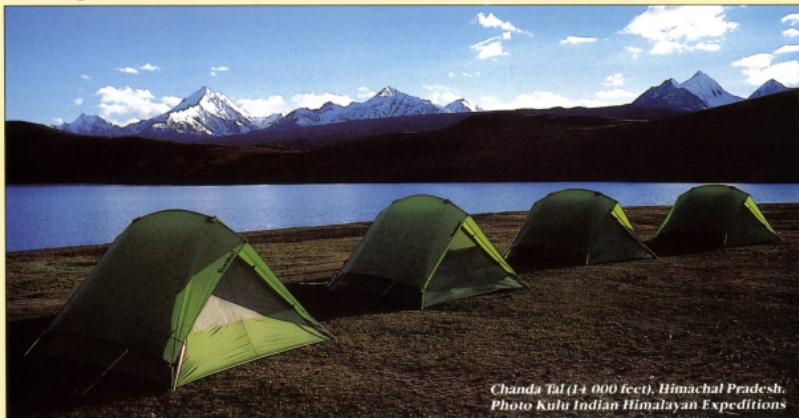
WILD SHOT



Spot the endangered species—Stephen Bray says hello to a carpet snake, New England National Park, New South Wales.
Andrew Cox

Wild welcomes slides for this page; payment is at our standard rate. Send to the Editor, *Wild*, PO Box 415, Prahran, Victoria 3181

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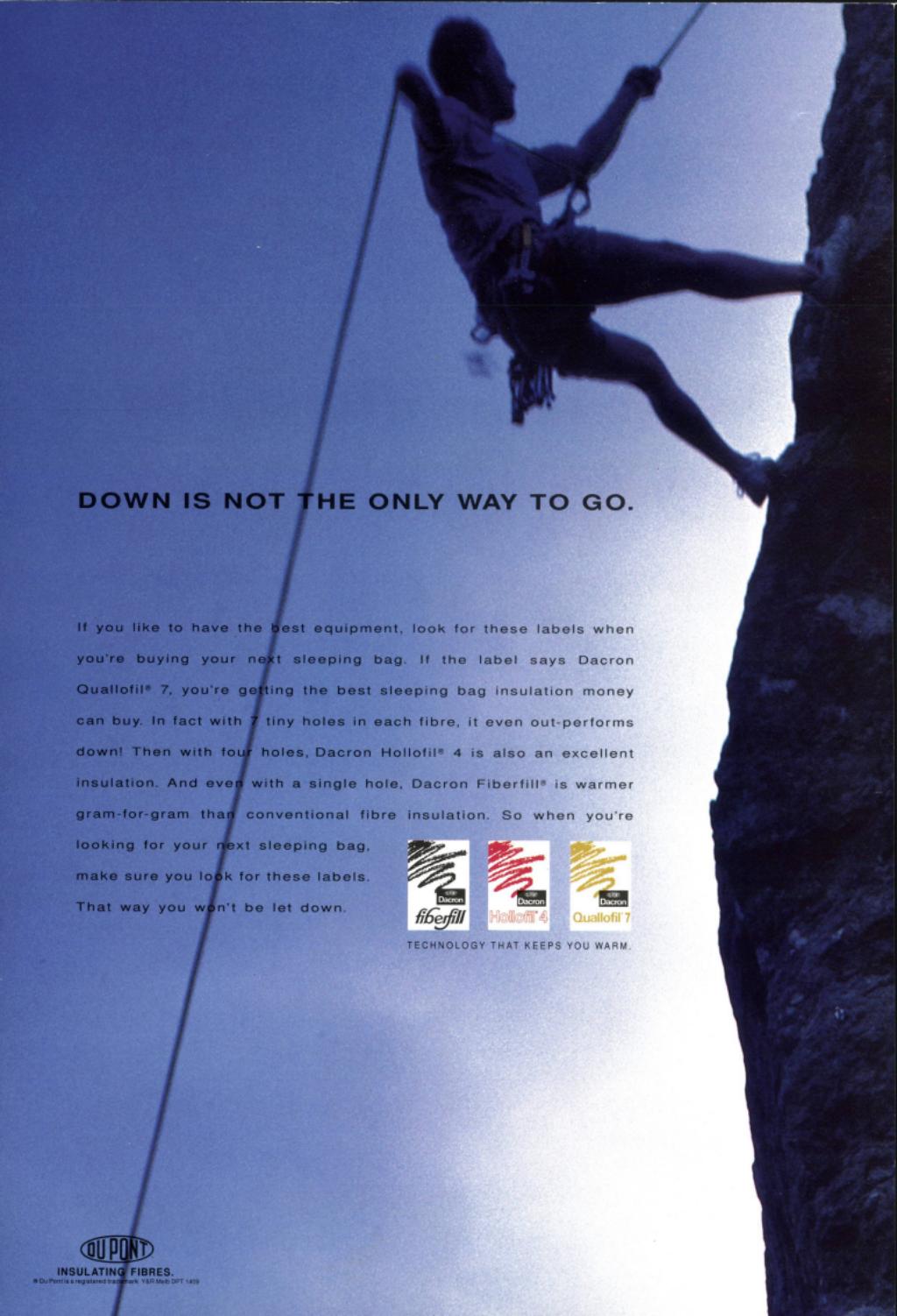
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